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Wednesday January 17 1996

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
46,451

Will Hutton on Labour's big idea

Taking a stake in Blair's Britain

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City watchdog investigates 'Copperfingers' network

Patrick Donovan, Dan Atkinson and Chris Barrie

A NETWORK of financial trading companies controlled by Charles "Copperfingers" Vincent, one of Britain's most highly paid company directors, is being investigated by the Securities and Futures Authority, the Guardian has established. The City's regulatory

watchdog, which has the responsibility for policing all exchange-based trading, is concentrating on the affairs of the Winchester Commodities Group, a privately owned concern in which Mr Vincent, aged 35, holds 50 per cent of the shares.

Mr Vincent, whose annual salary of more than £15 million puts him ahead of composer Andrew Lloyd Webber and the pop singer Sting in the pay super-league, earned

his nickname from his skill in commodity trading.

He is the highest paid director of the group, which controls a string of subsidiary companies. Activities range from sophisticated "futures" share dealing, to fund management and commodity trading on behalf of City institutional clients. It also has a brokerage division in the US, according to accounts posted in Companies House.

registered as a director of the company, said yesterday he had "some knowledge" of the SFA investigation.

Last night Mr Vincent insisted that the company was not under formal investigation by the SFA but there had been contact about how the business operated under regulatory rules.

"We have had dialogue and there are some major grey areas," he added. It is understood that Mr

Vincent and a former director, Ashley Levett, now have "other interests" outside the company, which are increasingly taking up their time.

The Companies House documents show that the company's 48-strong payroll of employees and directors enjoyed an overall salary bill of around £55 million.

The vast majority of this figure is accounted for by payments to Mr Vincent and Mr Levett, who between them

own all shares in the company.

Fees paid to Mr Vincent shot up from £5,722,906 to £14,950,155 for the year to April 30. Mr Levett, who resigned as a director of the firm in June last year, posted a salary rise from £10,094,904 to £14,942,787 over the same period.

These payments are in addition to their salaries as directors which are not specified, although board pay

scales ranged from £70,000 to £810,000.

The huge fees were paid into separate companies, known as CAMV and AML, which were "respectively connected" to CAM Vincent and AM Levett, according to Winchester's Companies House filings.

The accounts also state that £1,568,579 was advanced by Winchester to another company, Finneas Trading, which is described in the accounts

as being "controlled by A M Levett and C A M Vincent".

The SFA has the power to levy unlimited fines and can expel members, which effectively bars a member from working in the City or in any career related to the financial markets.

The regulatory body can also pass its findings to other authorities, including the Serious Fraud Office and the Department of Trade and Industry.

Siege crisis grips Russia

Chris Nuttall in Ankara, James Meek in Pervomayskaya and David Hearst in Moscow

THE escalating, bloody crisis in the breakaway republic of Chechnya surged beyond Russia's borders last night as 20 or more masked Chechen gunmen seized a ferry with 165 people on board in the Turkish port of Trabzon and threatened to kill all the Russian passengers if the ship did not immediately set sail.

"They said they would kill a Russian citizen every 10 minutes if the captain did not come," the Anatolia news agency reported, as Turkish security police sealed off the docks.

By last night, the crisis which began when rebels led by the "Lone Wolf" Salman Raduyev seized some 3,000 hostages in the Dagestan town of Kizlyar, had drawn in four countries: Russia, Turkey, Dagestan and Chechnya. While tanks and helicopter gunships pounded the village of Pervomayskaya, where rebels held out for a second day, Russian jets reportedly went into action some 12 miles away against a convoy of Chechen reinforcements trying to lift the siege. About

150 rebels were killed in that unconfirmed attack, according to the interior ministry spokesman.

Meanwhile, in the Chechen capital of Grozny, rebel fighters seized about 30 Russian workers as hostages.

In the Trabzon assault, Chechens loyal to the separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev fired automatic rifles as they stormed the ferry which was bound for the Russian Black Sea port of Sochi, with 120 passengers and 45 crew. One unidentified passenger was reportedly killed and a Turkish policeman wounded during the lightning assault.

The Panamanian-flagged Avraaya sailed at about 9.45pm local time, towards an undisclosed destination, Anatolia said. The ship's Turkish captain hid initially, but was found and ordered to depart.

A Russian woman who escaped shortly before the gunmen closed the boarding gates said there were several wounded people on the ship. Nadia Naskova said the Chechens ordered Russian passengers to gather, then started beating them.

Hospitals in Trabzon were on red alert and were told to expect casualties.

The assault marked the first time since Russian forces began an all-out war to reconquer Chechnya in December 1994 that Chechen



A member of a Russian military unit calms a crying comrade after a friend was killed during the storming of up to 250 Chechen guerrillas near Pervomayskaya yesterday. Russia said an attack on a convoy of Chechen reinforcements left 150 rebels dead.



'They said they will kill a Russian citizen every 10 minutes if the captain does not come'

— Chechen rebels taking over ferry

threats to extend the struggle wherever there are Russian targets has become a reality. There is a 25,000-strong Chechen community in predominantly Muslim Turkey.

In a further escalation of the conflict yesterday, Gen Dudayev ordered Chechen forces to launch "wide-scale" terrorist revenge attacks in Chechnya and Dagestan.

After two days of unrelenting Russian artillery and aerial bombardment and ground assault to free hostages in Pervomayskaya, Chechen fighters still held two-thirds of the tiny settlement, where an estimated 75 Russian hostages remain.

Mr Raduyev issued radio calls to Chechen fighters to come to his rescue.

A Chechen spokesman in Moscow accused the Russian forces of using "indiscriminate fire" to crush Chechen resistance. "The night of fire is terrifying. They are trying to destroy the whole village," the spokesman said.

Asian Maskhadov, Gen Dudayev's chief of staff, ordered rebel units to begin what he called "wide-scale terrorist acts", according to the Federal Security Service in Grozny, which claimed to have intercepted repeated radio messages. In chaotic scenes in

Grozny, which had reportedly been bombed on Monday night by Russian planes returning from Pervomayskaya, there seemed every possibility of a fresh rebel offensive.

A woman and child were injured in the bomb blast, which ruptured a pipeline.

In Moscow, President Boris Yeltsin refused to present an official report of the Pervomayskaya fiasco to angry deputies on the first day of the new parliament. Duma deputies claimed the government had lost control of the north Caucasus region.

By last night, only 26 of the 100 or so hostages held in Pervomayskaya had escaped or

been released. The rebels said they released four hostages to "tell the truth" about what was happening and to stop "deadly Russian fire".

One freed hostage — a policeman, according to the Chechens — was sent to deny that two of his colleagues had been executed on Sunday by Gen Raduyev's men. The execution was quoted as the pretext for the Russian operation.

The Russian authorities prevented freed hostages from talking to the media.

Yeltsin lurches right, page 6; Leader comment, page 6; A war without rules, page 9

Suicide girl's parents die

Alex Bellis

THE parents of a 12-year-old girl who strangled herself with a silk tie were yesterday found hanged at their Bristol home.

Barbara and Michael Henry were unable to come to terms with their daughter, Michelle's death last November, close family members said last night.

Vida Tucker, Barbara's cousin, said: "We are a very close-knit family. Michelle's death hit us all very hard. Her parents never got over her death and clearly they just couldn't handle it any more."

Barbara, aged 38, and Michael, aged 37, were discovered hanging from the staircase by her brother, Derek Francis, after he returned from a night shift at a hotel cleaner.



An Avon and Somerset police spokesman said both deaths were being treated as suspicious. A Home Office pathologist was yesterday brought in to perform the post-mortems.

Mr Francis, aged 34, who shared the three-bedroom flat in the Montpellier area of Bristol with the family, also found Michelle dead in her room last year.

He told the inquest that he had scolded her the night before for having an untidy room.

He said: "When I came back in the morning, Michelle's bedroom door was closed but the light was still on. I had words with her the night before about her room being untidy and I did not want to trouble her so I went downstairs to make myself a drink. "Later on I knocked on the door two or three times and there was no reply. I pushed my way into the room and saw Michelle lying on the floor."

"I thought she had passed out or was sick. But then I turn to page 3, column 7

Kein Wort über den Krieg!

Ian Traynor in Bonn

WHO WOULD be a Brit? In reunified Germany, hardly anyone. If he or she were offered another tribal identity, the modern German would rather be almost anything but British.

Twice as many Germans would rather be French or American, almost three times as many would rather be Italian. Even the inscrutable Japanese are viewed as triply preferable to being English.

But the real role models for the 90s German are the Swedes, and even more so, the Swiss — striking rich, socially secure, shorn of any real international responsibility through neutrality.

Role models

Which state would you prefer as the model for Germany?

Switzerland	43 per cent
Sweden	31 per cent
Japan	16 per cent
Italy	13 per cent
US	11 per cent
France	10 per cent
England	5 per cent

Respondents could choose more than one country

tung, Anglophiles in Germany are an endangered species.

Given seven countries to choose as their model for the turn of the millennium, Germans put Britain at the bottom of the heap. Where 43 per cent plumped for neighbouring Switzerland, with Sweden

second at 31 per cent, only 5 per cent saw Britain as a role model.

However, the findings show that the wealthier, younger and better-educated German is more prone to Anglophilia than his poorer, more ignorant countrymen. Those on a monthly salary of 8,000 marks (£3,600) or more are four times more sympathetic to a British role model than those earning less than 2,000 marks (£900) a month.

As to which countries should be the priority foreign partnerships for Europe's economic powerhouse, Britain is lumped with China, Turkey, Israel, Italy and the Czech Republic, with 10 per cent or less support. By contrast, Russia, France and the US notch up scores of between 28 and 46 per cent. Translation of headline: Don't mention the war!

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2 NEWS

Sketch

Garbled plea for measured tones



Simon Hoggart

I AM just back from a spell in the Far East, where I listened to the BBC World Service every day. To be fair, it can be just a trifle dull. "The people of Guatemala go to the polls today" is probably of little more interest in China than it is in Cheadde.

listeners to tape it and play it back at slow speed. "Ahy say thufurr serrry" is "I have to say to the Foreign Secretary..."

800 Muslim survivors of the fall of Zepa and Srebrenica still suffer brutal captivity under Milosevic

Serbs 'run secret camps'



HUNDREDS of Bosnian Muslim prisoners are still being held at two secret camps within neighbouring Serbia, according to a group of men evacuated by the Red Cross to a Dublin hospital from one camp - at Sijivoca.

Men freed from clandestine detention tell Ed Vulliamy of random beatings and 'mobile torture machines'

A group of 24 men was flown to Ireland just before Christmas and agreed to speak exclusively to the Guardian a few days later.

ince, since the prisoners are held within Serbia proper. The Serbian president, Slobodan Milosevic, was a signatory to the Dayton accord on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs.

safety of relatives and friends still detained there, and retribution by guards. But they said they were treated "like animals" on their arrival with routine and random beatings.

office, its spokeswoman said officials were not allowed to comment on conditions within specific camps, but acknowledged "some abnormalities" in the treatment of prisoners - usually a diplomatic term meaning beatings and starvation-level food rations.

lived massacred after the town was taken last July. One man, Safet Ilic, did escape Srebrenica with a group of people who elected not to surrender but to set off to Tuzla in a column of about 2,000.

Saudi plane grounded as writs fly

John Mullin



Going nowhere... The Saudi plane, with injunctions such as the one below taped to the cockpit. The owners owe about £100,000

IT BEARS the call sign of the Saudi royal family, and it is impounded. Boeing 707-351, a specially modified plane, is unable to move for sheet after sheet of injunctions taped on it.

the total stands at 11, including two plastered over the windscreen. A High Court warrant, dated January 10, says the plane has been seized by an officer of the Sheriff of Kent and must not be moved without his express written permission.

lives in Herne Bay, is regularly in contact with Mr Knight in the hope of hearing that the owners are meeting their commitments again.

Which was more than could be said for the aircraft. Mr Knight said he had regularly seen the Saudi Arabians who stepped off the flight to be whisked up to London in limousines.

fees and parking costs which put even NCP to shame. The airport was puzzled by what had gone wrong.

Mr Knight said: "Call it like a giant starting handle. If you like. But we have got equipment they need to get the engines started, and without it, the aircraft is going nowhere."

Review

A House worth staying home for

Nancy Banks-Smith

THE HOUSE (BBC2), as insiders call the Royal Opera House, was gorgeous, knockabout stuff, more panto than opera.

body told us," he said tightly. "There are limits and I've reached mine."

In the High Court of Justice

The item described in the Sheriff's inventory as FEZ-71... PARVITE AIRCRAFT, BZ-SAKI has been seized by an Officer of the Sheriff of Kent under a Warrant in the above action.

Howard policy on lifers 'close to lynch law'

Clare Dyer reports on Lord Donaldson's attack on minister's whole life tariff ruling

THE Home Secretary's policy of taking "public acceptability" into account when deciding to release prisoners serving life for murder comes "perilously close to lynch law", Lord Donaldson, former master of the rolls, said last night.

tions, he would consider it at the time, he said. Lord Donaldson said later that he still thought a challenge could be mounted on the grounds that the tariff had been changed from 30 years to whole life.

Telephone fiasco costs agency £2.5m a year

David Hencke

THE Benefits Agency is wasting more than £1 million a year through not having an internal telephone directory, the National Audit Office says in a report.

locations, which lack a directory costing £240,000. As a result thousands of operators are being employed connecting staff on top of their job of dealing with the general public.

Exclusive Sony Sale Offer.

Advertisement for Sony CM-R111K mobile phone. Includes price (£9.99), features (9 speed dial, 60 mins talk-time), and ordering information (FREEPHONE 0500 000 888).

Handwritten text in Arabic script: 'صكنا من الامل'

Overseas aid to be slashed

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

THE Government was facing a fresh row over public spending cuts last night after it was revealed that ministers intend to slash the number of countries receiving British aid to just 20 of the world's poorest nations.

In the biggest scaling back of the bilateral overseas development programme since the second world war, Britain intends to concentrate a diminishing pool of funds by pulling out of Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific and south-east Asia.

Despite strong historic and strategic ties with some of the countries affected, the UK will focus on sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian sub-continent and help other parts of the world via its contribution to multi-lateral bodies such as the European Union and the World Bank.

for the rich donor countries of the West, but Britain's record is already one of the poorest in the developed world.

Ms Lestor said that a Labour government would "reverse the trend".

The FER stressed that Britain could no longer afford to spread its aid budget thinly around the globe, and would instead seek to use its influence in Brussels, through which more than half the ODA's funds are already channelled.

The UK has already taken steps to restrict bilateral aid to the nations it considers most needy. The largest 20 recipients accounted for 69 per cent of planned spending in 1994/5, up from 62 per cent in 1989/90.

Under current plans this will rise to 73 per cent in 1997/8, with a medium-term goal of 85 per cent.

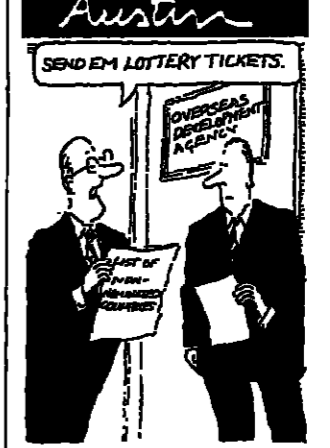
It is understood that the main recommendations of the FER have been accepted by the Overseas Development Minister, Lady Chalker, who has fought a long rearguard action against cuts in her budget, and will be made public next month.

In addition to the concentration of aid on the 20 countries, the FER seeks other savings. It calls for phasing out of the £25 million spent on ODA scholarships and reallocation of the money to country programmes, as well as more efficient funding arrangements for the British Council.

It adds that the Government should leave two UN organisations - the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) - and reduce its financial support for the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), unless pressure from the developed world forces rapid reform.

The United Nations has a target of 0.7 per cent of GNP

WIM Hutton, page 9



Parents of girl who committed suicide are discovered hanged

Continued from page 1

noticed the tie had been knotted around the door handle and I realised she was dead."

Mrs Henry, a homeless prospect worker, broke down after the hearing, which recorded a verdict of accidental death, and said: "We are desperately trying to come to terms with her tragic death, but I don't know how."

"She was a very happy and sensible girl and I just cannot see her killing herself."

"We used to tell her off quite a lot for being untidy and she would be a bit grumpy for a while but it would never last."

Ms Tucker, aged 54, saw Barbara and Michael a few days ago.

"Although they were smiling, under the surface they were both completely shattered," she said. "It takes time to come to terms with a tragedy like Michelle's death and I know they could never forget it."

Mrs Henry's father Granville said: "I just can't believe what has happened. There was never any sign that they would do anything like this."

"They were very close to Michelle and they obviously couldn't come to terms with what is happening."

A spokeswoman for the Samaritans said that it was very rare for a girl as young as 12 to commit suicide.

She added: "A suicide in the family does sometimes increase the risk of another suicide in the family. If you have been exposed to it, your perception of that being a way out is increased."



Janet Jackson, new monarch of pop, reigns over (left, from top) brother Michael and Madonna, both getting by on \$60 million, and Mick Jagger, who gets only a share of \$45 million

Janet Jackson's \$80m deal tips brother from top spot

Ian Katz

SHE was always the less talented younger sister trying to ride her brother's coat-tails to stardom. Detractors accused her of lip-synching and even using a body double to produce some of her flattering videos.

But no one's poking fun at Janet Jackson now. The 29-year-old entertainer has just signed the most lucrative recording contract in history, unceremoniously displacing her troubled sibling as the self-styled monarch of pop.

Ms Jackson, who has

battled for years to shed a troublesome reputation as the only "normal" member of the idiosyncratic showbiz clan, will receive an estimated \$80 million (about \$52 million) from Virgin Records for her next four albums.

The deal easily outstrips multi-million dollar recording contracts signed by other performers such as Michael Jackson, Madonna and the Rolling Stones and is expected to trigger a flurry of "me, too" demands from top acts.

Ms Jackson was able to negotiate the deal because a loophole in her contract with Virgin Records freed

her from obligations to the company if its ownership changed. Richard Branson sold it to EMI in 1994.

The singer's release triggered a fierce bidding war between executives from 10 entertainment companies. "It's not really a money-making deal," said David Browne, music critic of Entertainment Weekly magazine. "These kind of deals are made so that one mega-company can show other mega-companies that they have the clout to fork out that kind of money."

Ms Jackson began her career as a dimpled child actress in TV shows like Good Times and Facts of

Life. She tried her hand with limited success on the big screen but came of age as a pop diva in recent years with a string of hit solo albums.

More than 30 million copies of her last three albums have been bought and her greatest hits album, Design of the Decade, has been selling respectably since it was released last autumn.

"Most of the artists who signed mega-deals a few years back are no longer in their selling prime," Geoff Mayfield, director of charts for Billboard Magazine, told the Los Angeles Times. "But Janet's graph is still definitely on the rise."

Though few consider Ms Jackson as fine a vocalist as her scandal-prone older brother, her success has been built on her talents as an all-round entertainer and an ambition reportedly unsurpassed in the industry.

She has also been the beneficiary of one of the pop business's biggest marketing efforts, and her output of bland dance pop is promoted by a stream of glossy, aerobic videos.

Until now, Madonna reigned as Queen of Pop with a multi-album deal with several Time Warner companies worth \$60 million. Michael Jackson is still scraping a living from

a \$60 million deal with Sony struck in 1991, while the Rolling Stones are forced to divvy up a meagre \$45 million for three whole albums.

Ms Jackson is unsurprisingly delighted with the belated recognition of her talents. "I worked hard to get to this position in my career," she told the Los Angeles Times. "It really feels wonderful to be so wanted."

Meanwhile, La Toya, who has always felt rather less wanted, has launched a high-rate phone-line on which she promises to disclose some of her family's ugliest secrets.

£13,500 award for IRA bomber's ankle injury

David Sharrock
Ireland Correspondent

THE convicted IRA bomber Donna Maguire was yesterday awarded £13,500 compensation for an ankle injury caused by tripping on a footpath, which she said had forced her to give up dancing and wearing high heels.

Ms Maguire, aged 28, sued the Department of the Environment in the High Court in Belfast. She claimed damages for injuries sustained when she tripped in her home town of Newry, Co Down, in 1985.

Explaining the delay in dealing with the case, Ms Maguire's solicitor told the judge: "The plaintiff was outside the jurisdiction for a lengthy period of time."

Ms Maguire was in custody in Germany for six years before she was convicted last June of being involved in a bombing at a British army base at Osnabruck in 1989. She was sentenced to nine years' jail but was freed immediately because of the time she had been in custody.

Ms Maguire said in evidence yesterday that she fell after her foot became trapped in a broken paving stone. "My ankles were twisted and the left one was bleeding," she said. "I had to lean on my aunt to get home."

The left ankle swelled up and was bandaged in hospital after being X-rayed. "I still get pain when I walk a long distance or have to stand a long time. I have had to give up dancing, jogging and swimming because the ankle swells up. I can't wear high heels and the ankle is not very stable when I walk on rough ground."

Mr Justice Fringle said that despite doubts and suspicions, he had reached the conclusion that Ms Maguire fell because of a defect in the pavement. He awarded her £12,000 for pain and suffering, with the balance made up of interest and loss of wages as a secretary.

Liability was denied by the Department of the Environment and its lawyer was granted a six-week stay to consider an appeal.

The Ulster Unionist MP for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, Ken Maginnis, said he

was disgusted by the award. "It's galling to think that somebody who has sought to inflict so much damage now finds herself being compensated for an alleged injury."

Ms Maguire ended a six-year tour of the prisons of three European countries last summer.

In July 1989 she was arrested at Rosslare, Co Wicklow, and charged with importing sodium chlorate, used in bomb-making, but was subsequently acquitted.

She was rearrested in June 1990 in Belgium and charged with membership of an illegal organisation and arms possession. The case never came to court, but she was extradited to the Netherlands to face charges of the murder of two Austrians shot by the IRA in Rossmore.

In March 1991 she was acquitted by the Dutch court, but extradition proceedings were renewed and she was transferred to Germany. In June 1994 a German court acquitted her of bombing a British army base near Hanover in 1990 and of involvement in the murder of Major Michael Dillon-Lee in Dortmund.

Chris Stevens in Bucharest and Sarah Boseley

A BRITISH man has been ordered not to leave Romania while police investigate a charge against him of taking a baby girl from a children's hospital and smuggling her into Britain.

The Foreign Office confirmed yesterday that John William Boast, aged 47, who lives in Romania, was suspected of abducting one-year-old Laura Varga.

He is not in police custody, but he is prevented from leaving Romania, a spokesman said. "The British embassy in Bucharest is aware and we are in touch with one of his lawyers."

He said it was not certain where the child was.

The Romanian prosecution service said it was investigating allegations that Mr Boast took the baby out of the country illegally and gave her to a family in London in December. He was arrested but then released soon after he arrived back in the country towards the end of the month.

The case is sensitive for the

Romania accuses Briton of smuggling baby girl

Romanians who have repeatedly insisted that stringent new adoption laws have put an end to corrupt and illegal practices which once enabled foreigners effectively to buy babies without proper checks on their suitability. Some of those with mental or physical disabilities were later rejected by the adoptive parents.

A Romanian press report says Mr Boast told the police he had taken the baby with the full consent of the parents and the authorities at the hospital in Oradea in the north-west, near the Hungarian border. Mr Boast lives in Finis, a village nearby.

A Home Office spokesman said he had no knowledge of a Romanian baby being brought illegally into Britain. Any child brought into the country from Romania would need entry documents from the British embassy in Bucharest.

Illegal adoption has been a raw nerve for Romania since its break with communism in 1989. In the subsequent chaos thousands of foreign couples took advantage of lax adoption laws to buy babies from impoverished families.

The Romanians have repeatedly insisted that stringent adoption laws, passed in 1992, have stamped out the practice. Yet in July 1994, Adrian and Bernadette Mooney, were arrested as they tried to smuggle a baby girl across the border into Hungary. The British couple, who already had a Romanian daughter adopted legally, had paid mediators and the Gypsy parents who gave up the baby. They were given two-year suspended sentences.

Last year a British aid worker, John Davies, had his visa cancelled after allegations that he masterminded a baby-selling organisation from his station in Transylvania. He allegedly supervised a group of pregnant Romanian mothers who crossed the Romanian/Hungarian border to give birth and returned without their babies.

The Romanian Orphanage Trust, which encourages the return of abandoned children to their parents or extended families, said only 5 per cent of children in orphanages were actually orphans.

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4 BRITAIN

Owners charged with manslaughter after death of six novice crew of 'illegal and unseaworthy boat'

Trawler crew left 'to sink or swim'

Geoffrey Gibbs

THE novice crew of a British trawler who died when their boat sank 13 miles off the south Cornwall coast almost five years ago were sent to sea in an unstable, unseaworthy, illegal vessel that had no adequate life-saving equipment and no adequate means of alerting the rescue services in the event of an emergency, a court was told yesterday.

Joseph Anthony O'Connor, owner and managing agent of the Plymouth-registered scallop trawler *Pescado*, and Alan Ayres, co-owner of the vessel, are each charged with the manslaughter of the six crew, three of whose bodies have never been recovered.

The victims were the skipper Neil Curry, aged 30, the mate Peter Birley, 34, deck hands Stephen Hardy, 33, Adrian Flynn, 21, and Sean Kelly, 17, and Mr Curry's fiancée Jo Ann Thomas, 23, the cook.

Opening the case for the crown, Francis Gilbert QC, told the jury of six men and six women at Bristol crown court that the *Pescado* had never fished lawfully while under Mr O'Connor's ownership or control.

Mr O'Connor and Mr Ayres denied the charges. The trial before Mr Justice Mantell is expected to last six weeks.

Mr Gilbert told the court that the *Pescado* set sail from Falmouth on February 28, 1991, to fish for scallops. The wreck was found on the seabed 13 miles south of Dodman Point in Cornwall in April of that year. It was raised in September 1993, and taken to Devonport dockyard in Plymouth.



Joseph O'Connor (top) and Alan Ayres

Describing four of the crew as "the innocents", Mr Gilbert told the court that Sean Kelly, a boy of 17, Mr Hardy, a welder, Mr Flynn and Ms Thomas had no experience of fishing. Mr Birley and Mr Curry had little or no experience of scalloping, in which metal rakes or dredges are dragged along the bottom of the seabed. Mr Curry was not qualified to act as skipper of a vessel.

"They were, in effect, novices who were sent to their deaths by the defendants," he told the jury. The evidence would show that at the time of

her last voyage the condition of the *Pescado* and her equipment were such that she could not lawfully go to sea. As a result of changes made to the vessel during a refit in 1990 she did not comply with minimum stability criteria, and Mr O'Connor knew that was the case.

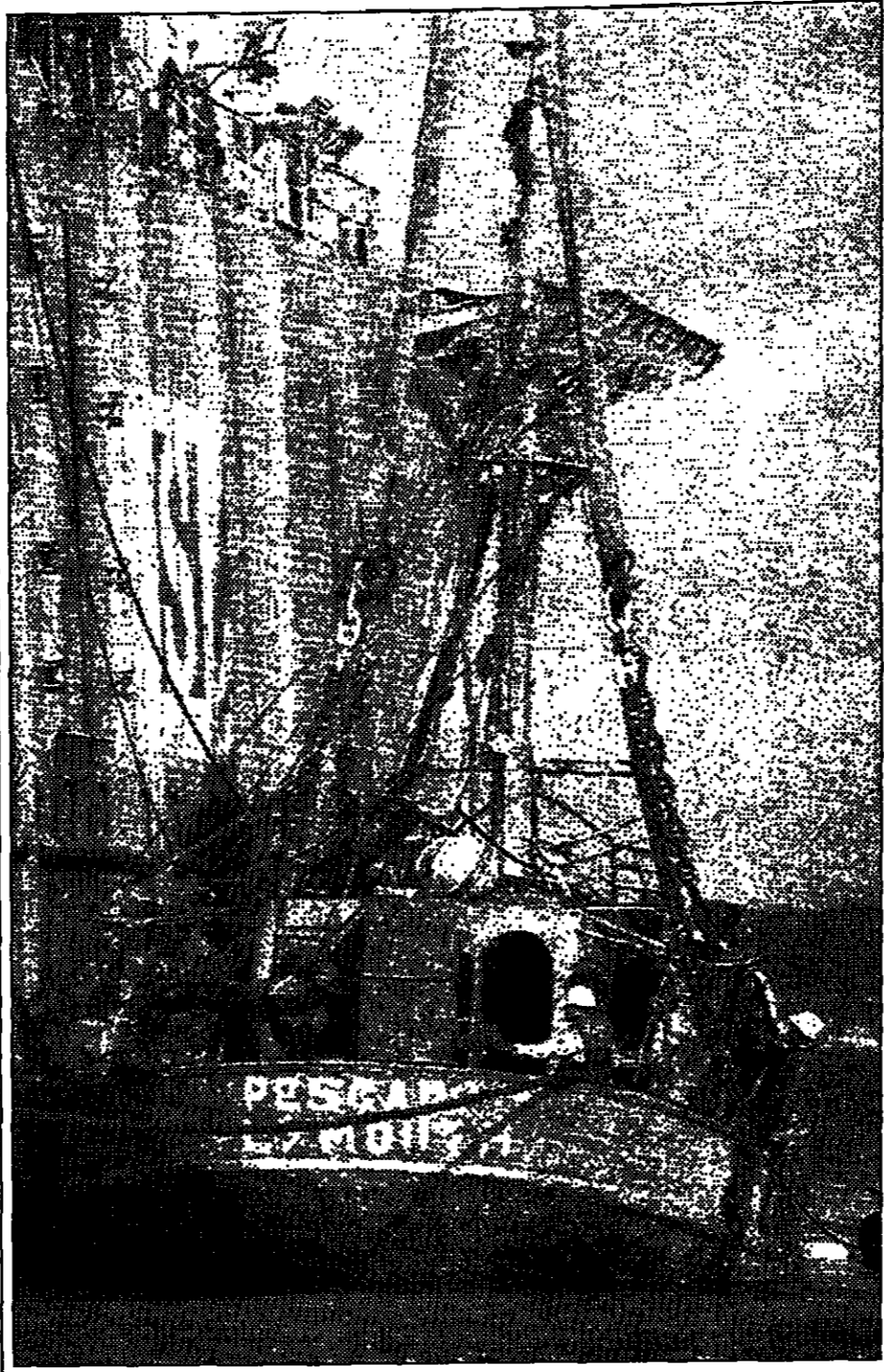
Mr Gilbert said the *Pescado's* long-range radio did not work. The boat was carrying only one life raft instead of the two required by law, and it was past its service date. Contrary to regulations the boat did not carry an emergency radio beacon designed to float free in the event of the boat sinking. If a beacon had been fitted rescue services would have been alerted immediately to the sinking and the boat's location.

"Some at least [of the crew] would have survived if they had had the equipment required by the regulations. As it was, they had none. They were left to sink or swim and in the event they drowned."

Mr Gilbert said the precise reason for the boat's sinking was going to be a matter of dispute. The crown said all the evidence pointed to the *Pescado* capsizing as a result of difficulties with her fishing gear and the crew not being sufficiently experienced to remedy the problem.

There was no evidence to support the theory that the *Pescado* had been sunk in a collision. "Even if it was, it does not absolve the defendants from responsibility for the safety of the crew."

"What this case is about is not why she sank but whether there was a breach of duty of care sufficient to amount to manslaughter." The case continues today.



The *Pescado* being brought into Plymouth in September 1993. It was found on the seabed 13 miles south of Dodman Point, Cornwall, in April 1991. PHOTOGRAPH: TIM COFF

Heseltine jumps gun on jobless

Michael White Political Editor

THE Government's desperate attempt to get on top of the "good news" agenda yesterday left Michael Heseltine open to criticism that he let slip monthly market-sensitive unemployment figures ahead of schedule.

The Deputy Prime Minister revealed that the figures, released today, will be "down for the 28th month in a row."

John Major also told MPs that "house prices have risen throughout the last five months," a claim narrowly sustained by some building society analysis.

Mr Heseltine's remarks, which breach guidelines to prevent the political manipulation of official statistics, were directly attributable to the internal party row triggered by Lady Thatcher's "No and publicly discuss unrelaxed economic figures to score party political points is unprecedented."

"Worse still, it looks as if Mr Heseltine was scoring points in his own party's civil war."

"By jumping in before either Gillian Shephard or Brian Mawhinney can say anything about these figures, Mr Heseltine has made a fool of himself."

Last night, One Nation Tory MP, like the former minister David Mellor defended Mr Burt.

Mr Major sounded tetchy when taunted by Tony Blair at Question Time.

"Matters within my government are for me and not you," the Prime Minister told him before seeking to exploit Labour's own internal divisions.

month in a row — those are the things that matter." The figures are traditionally guarded closely and the gaffe is a symptom of government under acute strain.

Only a few dozen people at the top of key ministries in Whitehall were given the latest figures on Monday night.

After a decade when jobless data and measurement systems were adjusted down to squeeze up to 1 million from the unemployment roll, tighter controls were agreed in 1993 at the instigation of Bill McLennan, the head of the Central Statistical Office.

It means that since the employment department was merged with education last July, the CSO issues them as quickly as possible without spin or comment.

Mr Heseltine jumped the gun, prompting Labour's deputy leader, John Prescott, to complain: "To deliberately and publicly discuss unrelaxed economic figures to score party political points is unprecedented."

"Worse still, it looks as if Mr Heseltine was scoring points in his own party's civil war."

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Skipper missing after fishing boat blast

Erlend Clouston

A FISHERMAN is missing, presumed dead, after an explosion destroyed the wheelhouse of his vessel and sent it and the remaining crewmen drifting in darkness on to the base of a 450-foot cliff.

Orkney coastguards abandoned the search for Paul Simpson, of St Lawrence, Jersey, at midday yesterday after

a rescue team found no trace of the captain's body aboard the wreck of the Jersey-registered *Inconnu*.

Earlier, an RAF helicopter from Lossiemouth had winched four men from the deck of the disabled 60ft creel boat as it was being pounded by waves on the west coast of the Orkney island of Hoy. A fifth fisherman in a life raft was picked up by the P & O ferry, *St Ola*.

Lifeboats from Stromness, Longhope and Thurso were also launched. The operation began after the *St Ola* spotted a red distress flare fired from the raft about 7.30am. Mist and drizzle hampered visibility.

Police yesterday named the survivors as Christopher Reid, 26, from Skye; Laurence Scott, 31, from Rainford, Merseyside; Keith McArdle, 37, of Ayrcliffe, Co. Durham; and Christopher Reid, 25, and Andrew Watt, 31, both from

Caithness. They were airlifted to the Balfour hospital, Kirkwall, where they were being treated for cuts and bruises and hypothermia.

The explosion followed a fire in the galley as the *Inconnu* made its way from Scrabster, on the Scottish mainland, to fishing grounds off the Orkney coast. The crew, without steering or wireless, attempted to launch their life raft, but it broke free with only one man aboard.

The four stranded on the wooden vessel had to sit for five hours while it was blown by 20 knot winds on to Rora Head, one mile south of the spectacular Old Man of Hoy rock pillar.

It is thought that Mr Simpson may have been knocked overboard by the blast.

The marine pollution control unit was last night monitoring the wreck for any sign of leakage of its 6,000 litres of diesel fuel.

Poorly advised pair face bank counter-claim

Martin Wainwright

A COUPLE who humiliated Lloyds Bank over poor mortgage advice and forced a review of high street bank lending practices faced a crippling counter-claim in court yesterday over loans and interest payments.

Teacher Julia Verity, aged 55, and acupuncturist Richard Spindler, 36, risk the loss of the £77,529 they won from Lloyds after the High Court ruled in September that the bank had been negligent over their affairs.

The case, which they conducted themselves, sent tremors through banking's system of local branches, after Maurice Hunt, Lloyds' then manager at Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, was criticised by Judge Robert Taylor for encouraging the pair in a rash attempt at property speculation.

But the renewed court action, which the couple described yesterday as the bank trying to profit from its bad advice, involves a £150,000 counter-claim from Lloyds over unpaid loans, including mortgages on their former house in Gravel Hill, Henley-on-Thames, and the nearby property in Greys Hill at the centre of the original dispute.

The complicated web of claims from both sides may end in compromise today if Ms Verity and Mr Spindler

accept Lloyds' offer to put the financial clock back five years. Gregory Mitchell, counsel for the bank, told the High Court in Leeds that a return to the position in 1990, before interest began to accumulate, would leave the couple only having to pay £37,000 mortgage and interest on the Greys Hill property.

Solicitor John MacKenzie, for Ms Verity and Mr Spindler, argued that £89,000 profits from selling the Gravel Hill house should have gone to pay off outstanding mortgages on both properties. Instead it was used to service a high interest bridging loan for renovations at Greys Hill — the nub of the advice condemned by the High Court in September.

Mr MacKenzie said the profits from selling Gravel Hill should go to pay off the mortgage on the property. The couple considered the £37,000 to be the full return in capital and interest on the loan from Lloyds.

He said: "After the proceeds had been paid to the bank the liability for any other debt was extinguished."

Mr Mitchell listed other loans taken out by the couple and still outstanding, including £30,300 for Mr Spindler to start his acupuncture business and a £5,000 personal loan to Ms Verity.

The couple are expected to give their decision on the compromise proposal when the court reconvenes today.

Men skip bail on arms charges

David Sharrock Ireland Correspondent

AN ALLEGED former leader of the Irish National Liberation Army was on the run last night after skipping bail on charges relating to an arms snoop in the Irish Republic nine months ago.

Hugh Torney, who was named in a 1992 Old Bailey trial as the chief-of-staff of the INLA, failed to appear in Dublin's anti-terrorist Special Criminal Court yesterday.

Also missing were Sean Braniff, from the nationalist Twinbrook estate in west Belfast, and Dessie McCleary, of no fixed address. All are from Northern Ireland and were arrested last April on the main Dublin-Belfast road in vehicles which contained

automatic rifles, sub machine-guns and semi-automatic pistols.

When they appeared in court last July a Belfast solicitor read a statement claiming that the accused had influenced the INLA to suspend its military operations a month before the IRA called its 1994 ceasefire.

Yesterday the solicitor, Leo Morrison, told the court that Mr Braniff had been arrested in Northern Ireland and was in custody in Belfast where he was charged at the weekend with taking two shotguns and a rifle from a house in Annacloy, Co Down.

The Irish police said the Dublin High Court had granted bail. The men had been ordered to reside at an address in Kingscourt, Co Cavan, and to report daily to police.

Scargill's poll challenge to Labour

Seamus Milne Labour Editor

ARTHUR Scargill's fledgling Socialist Labour Party is to challenge Labour in next month's Hemsworth byelection. Its candidate will be a leading Women Against Pit Closures activist, Brenda Nixon.

In a traditional mining constituency, Labour's campaign team immediately sought to emphasise the distinction between Mr Scargill's personal decision to break with Labour and

the National Union of Mineworkers' longstanding affiliation to the party. Labour's candidate is the Leeds council leader, Jon Trickett.

Ms Nixon, aged 35, is a media studies student at Sheffield university. She said she would be fighting for the rebuilding of public services, repeal of anti-union laws, common ownership, and the "socialist values which New Labour has dropped and the Tories have tried to eradicate".

Mr Scargill, the NUM president, who will be her election agent, said he could not wish for a better candidate.

Ms Nixon said there was a lot of excitement about Socialist Labour and predicted her candidacy would "shake up" Mr Blair's party.

The contest — in one of Labour's safest seats where, by the party's own admission, the NUM is still an influential local institution — will provide a crucial measure of whether Mr Scargill's new party can make any kind of significant electoral impact.

Letters, page 8



Brenda Nixon: planning a shock for New Labour

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The channel that championed minority programming and quality popular culture seems to have gone a little mad. "It's spiky, Amazonian and utterly in yer face," screams the press material. The *Girlie Show's* presenters are going to be "flipping the script of laddish culture". They are the latest twist in postmodern culture — ladettes.

G2 page 7

صكنا ن الامل

17 JAN 1996

MP dismisses 'unrepresentative' campaign by businessmen ● Forty demonstrators arrested ● Police chief warns of rising costs

Newbury firms join protest at bypass

Owen Bowcott

A GROUP of Newbury businessmen yesterday launched a campaign to halt the town's £100 million western bypass and highlighted growing local support for anti-roads protesters delaying construction.

Their initiative, backed by Friends of the Earth, was dismissed by Newbury's Liberal Democrat MP, David Rendel, as unrepresentative.

As more than 40 demonstrators were arrested, Business Against the Bypass called for the bypass to be stopped.

"We do not want to see the desecration that has been proposed," said John Bentham, a local employer. "This bypass has been sold to us as solving all of Newbury's traffic problems, but it won't. A tunnel should have been built to carry the traffic."

Adrian Foster-Fletcher, an executive headhunter who has attended protests in his Jaguar, said the community had only woken up to the issues when anti-roads protesters arrived. "We were told

the M25 would solve all our problems, but it didn't."

Clive Osborne, whose electronics companies employ 200 people in the surrounding area, said 80 per cent of businessmen were concerned about the western bypass.

"It would have made more sense to put the bypass on the east where most of the business is situated."

Richard Frett, a chartered accountant and leading member of Newbury Business Breakfast Club, said: "An overwhelming majority of our members are against the western route. Their main concern was destruction of the beautiful countryside."

Mr Rendel had claimed 100 per cent of businessmen in Newbury backed the western route cutting through three sites of Special Scientific Interest and the valleys of the Lambourn and Kennet rivers.

But he said yesterday: "If I did say that 100 per cent of business was in favour, then I fully accept that was an exaggeration. It was a figure of speech rather than an arithmetically correct estimate."

But the MP and Liberal Democrats who control the local council still insist that businesses support their stance. A survey he had carried out in recent weeks showed that 95 per cent of businesses supported the bypass. But his survey did not specify the route.

Thames Valley chambers of commerce and large local employers such as Bayer and Vodafone were also in support. "The most recent survey by the local TV station Meridian found 6-1 support in favour of a bypass last year."

Mr Rendel said the Liberal Democrats had always favoured bypasses bringing environmental benefits. "But we are not in favour of open-

ing up new routes all over the place."

The officer in charge of policing the protest, assistant chief constable Ian Blair, said the cost to Thames Valley police had risen from an initial estimate of £35,000 to £55,000 a week in extra overtime. "It's our job to ensure both the right to work and the right to demonstrate. It's the job of the contractors to provide sufficient security staff to enable their workers to operate properly. I have no doubt that in the fullness of time work will proceed at a faster rate."

Yesterday, more private security staff were drafted in to push back protesters who eventually brought work to a halt by scaling trees.

At Donington Wood, north of the town, as many as 100 helmeted security men and women formed a cordon to keep protesters away from trees as they were felled by chainsaw. Work continued until the early afternoon, the longest continuous period of construction preparation.

Leader comment, page 8



Writing on the wall... "This bypass has been sold to us as solving all of Newbury's traffic problems, but it won't"

PHOTOGRAPH GARRY WEASER

Newbury update



Mr Rendel said the Liberal Democrats had always favoured bypasses bringing environmental benefits. "But we are not in favour of open-

Lead in mug poisoned pub cider drinker, court is told

Gary Young

A WOMAN developed lead poisoning and suffered permanent neurological damage after drinking cider from a hand-painted earthenware mug at a pub, the High Court in London heard yesterday.

Marian Bloom, aged 41, used to go to her local, the Queen's Head, in Stradbroke, Suffolk, every Friday for a few hours for her favourite drink from a hand-painted earthenware mug, which she started using in May 1987.

In summer that year she began getting stomach cramps and by December she had collapsed after an epileptic fit. Lead poisoning was diagnosed.

The cause was the high lead content in the glaze of the mug, which had been brought to the pub by another customer. Tests showed that Mrs Bloom had accumulated up to 10 times the level which humans can normally tolerate, according to her counsel, Susan Rodway.

Mrs Bloom claims that she has been left with memory loss, weakness in her hand and arm and co-ordination problems. She is seeking damages from the pub, the licensee, Mary and Frederick Farrow, also of Stradbroke.

The defence claims that Mrs Bloom has exaggerated the side effects so as to increase her damages, an accusation which she denies.

Ms Rodway said one question to be decided was whether the mug belonged to the pub and was used by Mrs Bloom, or whether Mrs Bloom became its owner.

The hearing continues today.

More delays hit care in community programme

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

MINISTERS have admitted there will be a delay of at least three months in ensuring full implementation of safeguards underpinning care in the community for the mentally ill.

The "care programme" approach will now not be in place in all areas until March, according to John Bowis, the junior health minister responsible for mental health policy.

The admission contrasts with instructions issued to health authorities in England last August in what was presented as a get-tough message from the Department of Health, authorities were set an end-of-year deadline to implement the care programme approach.

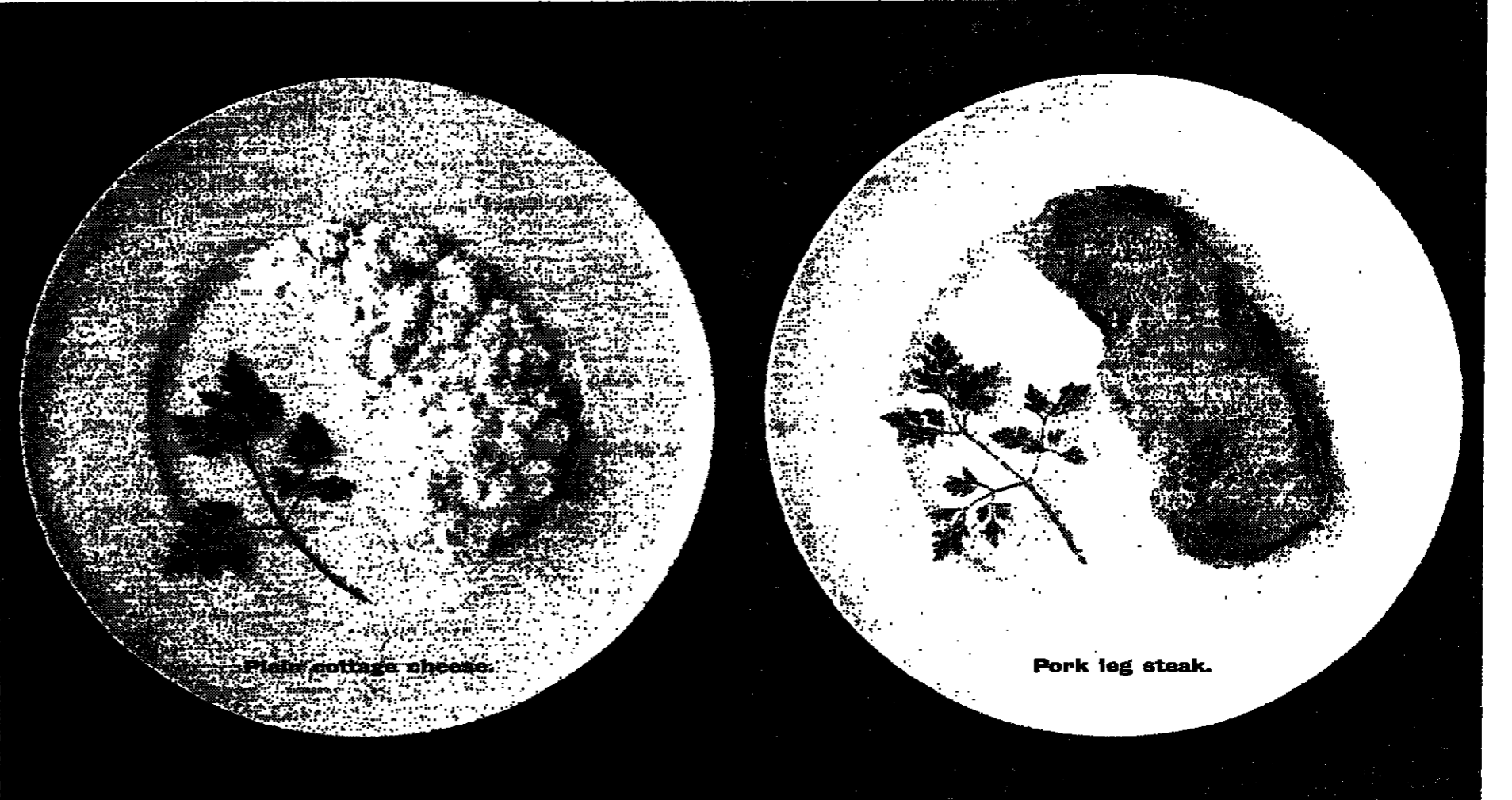
The programme provides for patients in the community to have a clear, individual plan of the care they are to receive and to be allocated a key worker to oversee their progress.

Yesterday's report of the Government's confidential inquiry into homicides and suicides by mentally ill people found that no care plan had been implemented in almost half the killings investigated and in most of the suicides.

The inquiry team said it was "left with the uncomfortable feeling that more strenuous efforts to insist on maintenance of contact might have been rewarded by fewer deaths".

Alan Milburn, a shadow health minister, said: "Coming hard on the heels of the confidential inquiry report, this further slippage in implementation of the CPA will undermine public confidence in the Government's mental health approach."

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Cottage cheese slice

Pork leg steak

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Last prominent reformer quits cabinet • President oversees assault on Chechen rebels • Moscow's 'spin doctor' admits war plan going awry

Besieged Yeltsin lurches to right

David Hearst in Moscow

RUSSIA'S first deputy prime minister, Anatoly Chubais, one of the few survivors of the first radical democratic government and author of the privatisation programme, offered his resignation last night to President Boris Yeltsin.

Coming as the president oversaw the bloody assault on the remaining Chechen rebels holed up in the Dagestan village of Pervomayskaya, Mr Chubais's departure signalled a further lurch to the right by the Russian government.

Mr Chubais told a news conference later that he was leaving because the president was unhappy with his work. He said Mr Yeltsin had accepted his resignation.

In the first day of the new Russian parliament, Mr Yeltsin came under heavy attack

for his handling of the Chechen hostage crisis. All day the Duma waited for a presidential spokesman to give an official report on the outcome of the operation. The liberal Yabloko group has vowed to seek a vote of no-confidence in the government, and yesterday it said it would also try to hound Mr Yeltsin out of office, after what it described as the bloody tragedy in Pervomayskaya.

"The federal authorities have again demonstrated the obvious — they are not in a position to lead the country," Yeltsin and prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin are dangerous for society, both with their actions and their lack of action," Yabloko said.

Gennady Zyuganov, the leader of the Communist Party and the largest faction in the new parliament, said: "It would be better for the whole country if Boris Yeltsin did not put himself forward for another term."

But Mr Yeltsin has shown every sign of being prepared for a fight to the finish. On Monday he gave his clearest hint that he would run again, and appointed another rival to Mr Chubais, the deputy prime minister Oleg Soskovets, as manager of his presidential re-election campaign.

The departure of Mr Chubais is the latest and biggest sign of the shift towards hard-line nationalism in the Russian government that many in the West have been fearing. Two days ago Sergei Filatov, another former liberal, quit as head of the presidential administration, to be replaced a

noted hawk, Nikolai Yegorov. Yesterday Mr Yegorov said that all rebel Chechens who engaged in violence should be wiped out. "All criminals who have raised arms against their own people must be destroyed," he said.

Mr Chubais, an economist from St Petersburg, was catapulted to national fame by the city's mayor, Anatoly Sobchak. He was rarely out of controversy as head of the state committee on property, which became the main vehicle of privatisation. He was the driving force of the first wave of privatisation, launched with a voucher given to every Russian citizen.

But he made powerful enemies as the second stage of privatisation began — auctioning off Russia's biggest privatised firms for a fraction of their real value. He clashed with the regional governors, and in particular with Yuri Lushkov, the powerful mayor of Moscow.

The issue of privatisation has become inextricably mixed with the controversy about the fall in government revenues, badly needed to fund increased pensions and social protection for millions of Russians living below the bread line.

In his period in office, Mr Chubais presided over the biggest sell-off of state assets in history, but the speed and scale aroused persistent criticism, latterly from the banks, that a few well placed people were profiting at the expense of the state.

To Western investors Mr Chubais was a pivotal reformer whose presence in the government ensured that it stayed on the path of free-market reform. Yesterday Mr Chubais was still involved in negotiating a three-year loan worth \$5.8 billion from the International Monetary Fund.

Leader comment, page 5; Dark days, page 9

eral, are doing all the damage themselves. When the Russian attack on Pervomayskaya began, the main reason given by Gen Mikhailov was that two captured Siberian interior ministry soldiers had been killed by the Chechens and strung up from a tree.

Yesterday he denied having said any such thing. The interior ministry captives, he said, were alive and well, and he had not the faintest idea who had been hanging from the tree. As the Russian assault against the tiny hamlet ran into trouble, Gen Mikhailov stopped calling it a village and started calling it a town. What had previously been an operation to rescue hostages or "destroy bandits" became instead

Snipers rattle the general

James Meek near Pervomayskaya, Dagestan

GENERAL Alexander Mikhailov admitted that he was "very concerned about snipers". "They have a range of 800 metres. This was not part of our plan," he said.

It was the first time the former KGB's chief spin doctor in the field had admitted that Moscow had overlooked any detail in the struggle to beat the Chechen hostage-takers. If houses where hostages are being held are set on fire, or riddled with bullets, that has nothing to do with the tons of munitions being buried into the settlement by the Russians. The Chechens, according to the gen-

eral, are doing all the damage themselves.

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As the Russian assault against the tiny hamlet ran into trouble, Gen Mikhailov stopped calling it a village and started calling it a town. What had previously been an operation to rescue hostages or "destroy bandits" became instead

"the liberation of occupied territory".

Russian attempts to steer the news with the subtlety of a supertanker helmsman are not confined to the media. Gen Mikhailov's boss and the commander of the Pervomayskaya operation, General Mikhail Baranov, was clearly behind President Boris Yeltsin's wildly optimistic forecast on Monday that the assault would be over by nightfall.

The Russians have made frequent and blatant attempts to mislead the media. President Yeltsin said on a number of occasions that Russian aircraft had stopped bombing Chechnya, when it was all too obvious they were still doing so.

Prisoner 'cattle market' flouts Dayton accord

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

A RED CROSS official accuses both sides in the Bosnian conflict yesterday of trading prisoners "like cattle" for money, instead of releasing them as agreed under the Dayton peace plan.

Jacques de Maio, a senior official of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Sarajevo, said the Bosnian Serbs and the Muslim-Croat Federation were reaching secret deals on prisoners, while failing to comply with their commitment to free them.

With only three days to go before all prisoners must be freed under the peace plan, he said there was no sign that the deadline would be met. Both sides preferred to trade behind the back of the international community.

"Bilateral exchanges are being arranged," Mr de Maio said. "It's about money. Let's be clear about that. It's a cattle market."

He said that prisoners' relatives would approach exchange commissions run by their own authorities and hand over money for their release. The exchange commissions then contacted their counterparts on the other side and organised trades.

Such exchanges had been known to involve prisoners, money, diesel and the bodies of dead soldiers. Mr de Maio said civilians, especially from minority groups, had been taken hostage to bolster bargaining power.

"It is the final stage of ethnic cleansing," he said. The market in prisoners has been a feature of the Bosnian war since it erupted in 1992. But ICRC officials are fu-

rious that the practice has continued since the signing in November of the Dayton peace agreement, which commits all sides to releasing their prisoners unconditionally under ICRC supervision.

Under an ICRC plan, both sides were due to free more than 400 prisoners yesterday at Sarajevo airport, but nobody turned up. Theiasco followed the failure of a prisoner release in western Bosnia on Monday.

The ICRC puts most of the blame on the Bosnian government, which has refused to release prisoners until the Serbs give a full account of the fate of thousands of Muslims missing after ethnic cleansing campaigns.

The ICRC has been allowed to see about 400 prisoners in Serb hands. The Bosnian government says that 24,000 Muslim men are unaccounted for. It insists that 4,000 are alive and in prison camps.

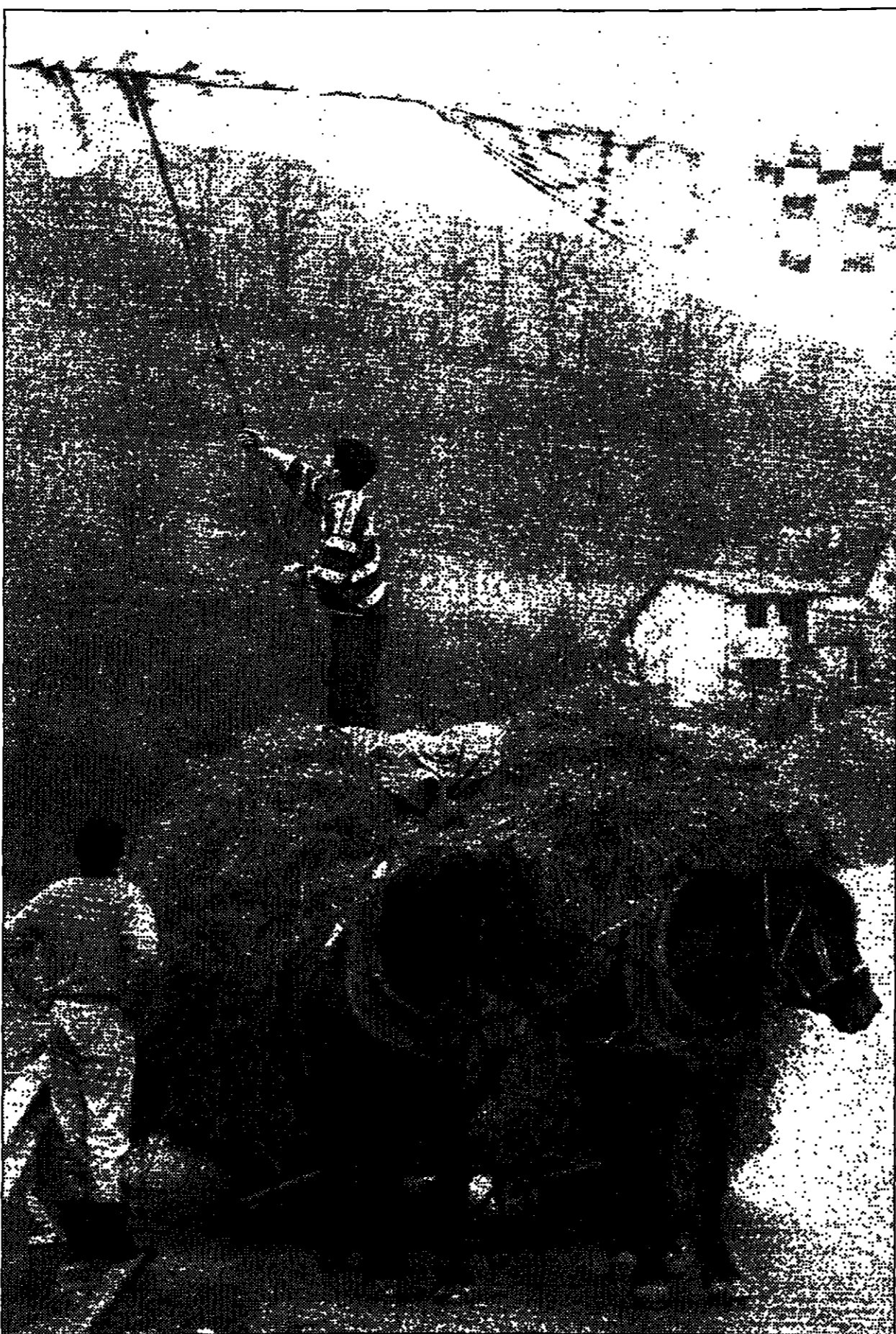
ICRC officials point out that the Dayton accord treats prisoners and the missing separately.

They say the ICRC is trying to trace the missing, but argue that the 900 prisoners officially acknowledged by both sides should not be used as a bargaining chip to find them.

Mr de Maio, co-ordinator of the monitoring and visiting of detainees in former Yugoslavia, confirmed claims that some prisoners were being held in Serbia and Croatia.

Admiral Leighton Smith, commander of the Nato-led peace implementation force, has the power to decide when the Dayton accord has been violated and what penalties to impose.

But Nato said yesterday that military action against the Bosnian government would be inappropriate.



Two defiant Bosnian Croats use local horsepower to erect a banner declaring their village Croatian. Under the Dayton agreement, the village of Majdan in central Bosnia is to be handed over to the Bosnian Serbs. PHOTOGRAPH CHARLES MILLER

Nato in talks on aiding war crimes investigators in Bosnia

Ed Vulliamy in The Hague

THE war crimes tribunal in The Hague said last night that it was working with Nato's high command to ensure "everything is in place" for its investigations into suspected mass graves in Bosnia, and the pursuit of war criminals.

As details emerged about the existence of a potential mass grave in a mine shaft near Pjedor, the tribunal spokesman, Christian Charrier, said that providing the investigators with security would be among the issues to be discussed by the chief prosecutor, Judge Richard Goldstone, and Nato's secretary-general, Javier Solana, in Brussels on Friday.

He warned that any attempt by the Bosnian Serbs or other parties to obstruct the investigations would lead the tribunal to report to the United Nations Security Council with a view to the "automatic reimposition of sanctions".

Tribunal officials say they are expecting arrests on the ground before too long, in which Nato will play a role.

Yesterday the tribunal held a closed hearing in the case of the only man accused of war crimes to be held in custody — the Bosnian Serb Dusko Tadic. His trial was set for March 18.

Most of the UN's data on alleged human rights violations in Croatia has been stolen from its offices in Zagreb, officials said.

St Catherine's Monastery & Petra

The recent opening of the 4-star Hilton Hotel in Nuweiba now makes it possible to combine the fascinating sites of St Catherine's Monastery, and further exploration of Sinai, with the 'rose red' city of Petra.

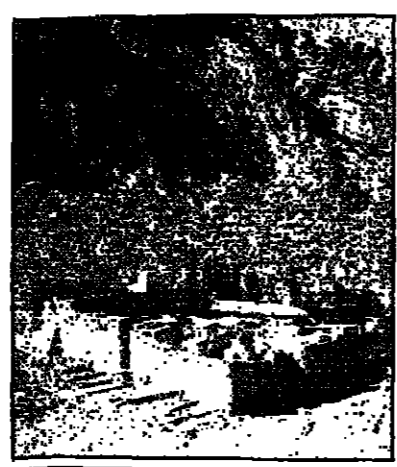
Our journey commences with a 3-night stay on Sinai's Red Sea coast at the Coral Hilton Hotel at Nuweiba. From here we pay a visit to both St Catherine's and the Coloured Canyon with time for relaxation before taking the ferry service to Aqaba and onwards to Petra for four nights.

Besides the 4-star Hilton at Nuweiba, accommodation has been reserved at the 4-star Forum Hotel in Petra. The journey concludes with a drive across the newly-opened border to Onda (up to May) for the return flight to London Gatwick.

The Monastery of St Catherine has attracted pilgrims since AD 537 when the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine, ordered the building of a sanctuary around the site of the Burning Bush. Its spectacular setting at the foot of Mt Sinai adds to the solitude and mystery of the site.

Petra was lost to the world after a change in well established trading routes but was re-discovered by the famous Swiss explorer Burckhardt in 1812. Since then, the area, half as old as time, has been a magnet for generations of travellers wishing to see and experience a truly unique city.

7 nights from £620.00 including 3 nights at the 4-star Hilton Hotel at the oasis Red Sea resort of Nuweiba



1996 DEPARTURES & PRICES
per person in a twin room, Sunday - flying into Onda
Feb 4, 11, 18, 25, £720
Mar 3, 10, 17, 24, £695 - Mar 31, £750
Apr 7, 14, 21, 28, £690 - May 5, 12, 19, 26, £650
Monday - flying with Monarch Airlines into Ras Al-Nakh
Sept 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, £650
Oct 7, 14, 21, 28, £650 - Nov 4, 11, 18, 25, £650
Dec 2, 9, 16, £620 - Dec 23, 30, £650
Single rooms supplement £165

Optional Extras
Lodgings, flights, 7 nights' accommodation, hot brand Petros, museum, Nuweiba, excursions, transfers, local representation, guides, Net included, insurance, visa, recruitment, airport fees, entrance fees, tips. Prices are subject to change.

Full day tour to Aqaba and Irbid with lunch £90. 1 Day tour to Wadi Rum with lunch £28. 10. Little Petra £10.

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Santer firm on EMU timetable

John Palmer in Brussels

THE president of the European Commission, Jacques Santer, warned yesterday that the sacrifices involved in reducing budget deficits to boost growth and create jobs will be more painful, not less, if the single currency project fails.

He angrily denied that monetary union was to blame for the unpopular measures taken by governments to reduce their deficits.

"Since all over Europe these deficits threaten the social security of future generations, there is only one answer: tackle the fire. With or without Maastricht. With or without the single currency," he declared.

In an uncharacteristically passionate address to the

European Parliament in Strasbourg, he went on to warn that abandoning the single currency might also have devastating political consequences.

"This is not the moment to call into question the cause of the single currency," he told MEPs.

"The failure of a project which is not only demanded by developments in the real world but has been solemnly enshrined in a treaty would be a very grave defeat, perhaps decisive for the European Union itself, with all that this implies for the future of Europe as a whole."

Mr Santer's affirmation of faith in the 1999 timetable for monetary union appeared primarily aimed at those in Germany and Britain pressing for a delay in introducing a single currency.

It followed a joint declaration by President Jacques Chirac and Chancellor Helmut Kohl this week urging new measures to stimulate economic growth and reduce unemployment in the EU.

Mr Santer said that without measures to curb deficits EU countries might have to spend up to 20 per cent of their budgets in loan interest, as Italy and Belgium were doing.

Referring to the EU's limited success in reducing unemployment, he said that a single currency would help job creation by eliminating currency speculation, reducing interest rates and financing costs, ensuring a more efficient use of investment, and reducing Europe's dependence on the US dollar.

Other EU governments hope to be given a clearer

idea of what steps Germany and France want to boost growth and jobs when finance ministers meet on Monday.

One possibility is co-ordinated interest rate cuts throughout Europe.

Mr Kohl would also like to see trades unions and employers in member states negotiate a jobs pact giving more flexible working arrangements for lower working hours and commitments by industry and governments to expand worker training and education.

But if economic growth does not pick up as forecast later this year, the EU will have to choose between delaying the EMU timetable or interpreting the Maastricht treaty conditions for a single currency more flexibly.

G7 pressure, page 12

News in brief

Mitterrand's family sue Paris-Match

FRANCOIS MITTERRAND'S wife and children launched a lawsuit against Paris-Match yesterday for publishing photographs of the late French president laid out on his bed hours after his death last week.

France opens up to allies

FRANCE is ready to discuss nuclear strategy with its Nato allies and move towards military reintegration with them.

China curbs finance reporting

CHINA has imposed new curbs on the flow of economic information from foreign news agencies, slamming shut a door opened by Deng Xiaoping's 1979 economic reforms.

Setback for Liberian accord

THE MILITIA at the centre of the latest fighting in Liberia said yesterday that it would not hand over its arms to African peacekeepers in accordance with a pact to end six years of civil war.

Sierra Leone's military leader toppled

SIERRA Leone's head of state, Captain Valentine Strasser, was overthrown yesterday and replaced by his deputy, the armed forces chief Captain Julius Maada Bio.



Hostages write to relatives

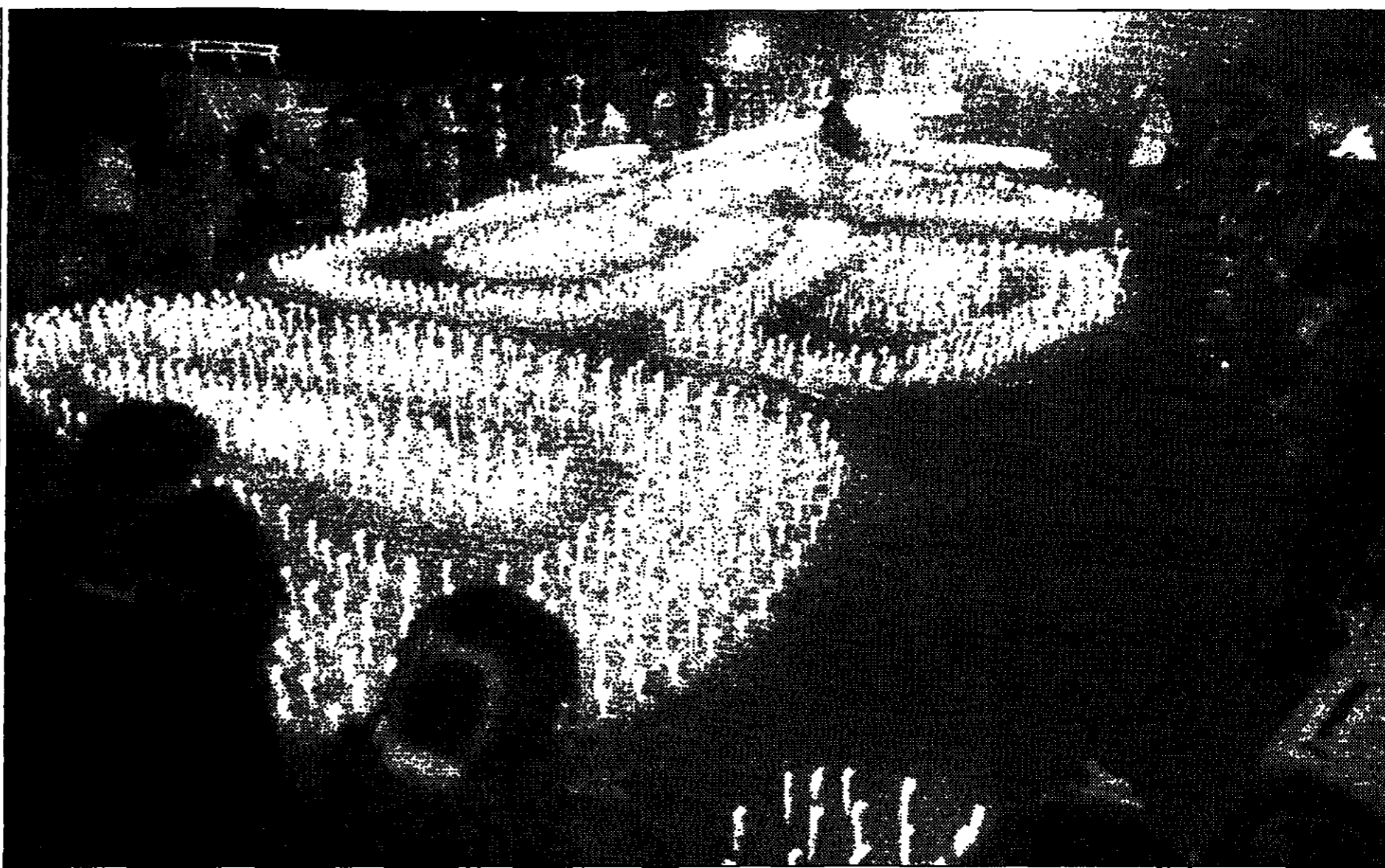
THE four British researchers being held hostage in the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya have been allowed to write home, an indication that their Free Papua Movement (OPM) kidnappers are in no hurry to release them.

Killer saved against her will

THE life of a convicted murderer scheduled to be put to death in Illinois this morning was spared yesterday, even though she had asked for her execution to go ahead.

The team at Central Office has once again played into Labour's hand. Setting the agenda is half the political battle; and by week two stakeholding has become the agenda.

G2 cover story



Quake anniversary... Japanese pray around candles set out in a pattern of islands for the 6,000 victims of the earthquake that hit the city of Kobe a year ago today

Indian politicians charged with graft

INDIA'S political landscape was in upheaval last night after the federal police charged seven politicians, including leading figures in the ruling Congress (I) and opposition parties, with receiving bribes in an \$11 million corruption scandal.

Security alert in Jerusalem as settlers threaten poll

TWO thousand extra police will be deployed in Jerusalem on Saturday as Palestinians go to the polls to elect a new self-rule council. Security has been beefed up after threats by Jewish militants to disrupt the election.

Dhaka's date with democracy nears

BANGLADESH faces a deadline next week which could determine whether its five years of democracy will survive or yield to the autocracy, military rule and political violence that have been its lot for 15 of its 25 years as an independent country.

Republicans carve out an à la carte budget

THE US budget battle is about to take an extraordinary new turn into uncharted constitutional waters as the Republicans prepare an à la carte budget funding only the programmes they want.

Top-level talks dash hopes of East Timor breakthrough

HIGH-LEVEL talks on East Timor between Indonesia and Portugal in London yesterday failed to address the crucial issue of sovereignty, despite earlier hopes of a breakthrough in the search for a solution to the 20-year-old conflict.

Martin Walker in Washington



John Kasich: Attacks Clinton school curriculum

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In search of a big idea

Can London give meaning to the millennium?

THE MILLENNIUM Commissioners who meet today to decide the site of the proposed Millennium Exhibition due to open on January 1, 2001 should thrust sentiment aside by choosing London. By the time it opens on January 1, 2001 it is expected to cost £300 million half of it coming from the National Lottery. Birmingham, the only other place under consideration, has obvious merits including a thriving corporation and an existing site well provided with infrastructure. But this is a project in a thousand years. It has to go to the nation's capital in order to maximise the number of visitors it will attract in a year and to give it the best chance of survival thereafter. If the exhibition is in London it will have a spin-off effect on the rest of the country by attracting more tourists from overseas. It needs to. Upwards of 25 million visitors are expected during 2001 — much more than Disneyland, Alton Towers and the British Museum combined.

It is a good and imaginative idea to celebrate the millennium, but there are two big weaknesses. First, whether the exhibition will be good enough for London and second whether London will be good enough for it. At the moment it is a grand project without a Big Idea. The 1851 exhibition celebrated Victorian pride in Britain's industrial supremacy (even though decline was already setting in). The 1951 Festival of Britain waved goodbye to post-war austerity. The 2001 exhibition so far has no grand theme and imaginative thinking is needed to prevent it from becoming a rag-bag of industrial and cultural bric-a-brac. Time is short. There are less than five years for it to be built compared with 7 years for a typical Olympic games. It can be done. Deadlines can be a tremendous creative force and the conception of Sir Richard Rogers last month was a shrewd move.

But is London ready to receive up-

wards of 25 million visitors? One of the reasons why London is to be preferred is that capital cities are dynamic elements in economic growth. A report published yesterday by the Greater London Group at the London School of Economics argues that Britain as a whole gains from a concentration of economic activities in London. Of course the LSE and London Transport (which commissioned the report) have a self-interest in the outcome, but the arguments are strong. London is a "world city", it is argued, because of the clustering effect of having concentrations of activities — from finance to the arts — located in one place. What is threatening London's world position is the lack of transport infrastructure to convey visitors and workers in and out of the centre without causing gridlock on the roads. Two projects with a high rate of return — the £2 billion CrossRail link joining the west and east of London and Thameslink 2000, a cost-effective £900 million scheme to remove bottlenecks from Luton to the South — have been lying inert since 1989. A fifth terminal at Heathrow has yet to be decided and the fast rail link from the Channel Tunnel — which could have been up and running by the millennium — has yet to be authorised.

The Millennium Exhibition is a good thing in itself, but it must be planned within the context of an evolving London. The proposed site at Greenwich is close to Stratford, a central plank in Michael Heseltine's dream of a Thames corridor. Maybe the Royal Opera House's search for a temporary Thames-side home while Covent Garden is being rebuilt should be directed to Greenwich where it might acquire a permanent role as something else. London has a vital catalytic role to play for the whole economy. But unless the right transport infrastructure is in place, it will be doomed to failure.

Prepare for a hollow victory

Yeltsin will pay a political price for his actions in Chechnia

THE OUTCOME of the battle for Pervomaiskaya is hardly in doubt: given their overwhelming strength, Russian forces are bound to take this bleak village, or rather what is left of it by way of shattered lives and buildings. But it will be a hollow victory unlikely to bring the Chechen leader, Dzatokhar Dudayev, to his knees, and more than likely to weaken Boris Yeltsin's political standing at home and abroad. It would be wrong to argue that Yeltsin is only earning his just deserts. For, even if it is impossible to remain indifferent to the firepower raining down on Pervomaiskaya, this is no black and white struggle between oppressed freedom fighters and a dictatorial regime in Moscow deaf to all compromise and determined to extinguish the Chechen rebellion by force. On both sides, there is double-dealing, cynicism, internal rivalries and disregard for human life. Costly mistakes have been made. Dudayev is far from a squeaky clean leader whose life has been dominated by a search for Chechen independence or autonomy. He is a man prepared to countenance hostage taking and the use of brutal methods, who is no longer in full control of all his fighters.

Yeltsin for his part made a cardinal mistake when he first ordered his forces into Chechnia in December 1994 and compounded his problems by ambivalence towards a negotiated settlement after the military agreement signed last July in the wake of the costly Chechen raid on the southern

Russian city of Budyonovsk. Now after the Chechen seizure of hostages in Dagestan, followed by still more hostage taking in Grozny and on a ferry in the Turkish port of Trabzon yesterday, Yeltsin really had very little choice: he could not let the Dagestan raiders regain their hideouts in the hills of Chechnia unless they let go of their prey. And this they refused to guarantee. Russian sledgehammer tactics are certainly unappealing. And given that after a two-day onslaught, Pervomaiskaya still remains in Chechen hands, they are obviously not very efficient. This is primarily a reflection on the Russian army's ineptness — perhaps the British government's Know How Fund should be invited to proffer a course in SAS expertise. But inevitably there is also a substantial political price for Boris Yeltsin. As Russia's new Parliament assembled in Moscow yesterday, Yeltsin's opponents saw the latest turn of the Chechen crisis as powerful ammunition to argue that he is unfit to seek a second term as President. The Communist party leader, Gennady Zyuganov, declared that Yeltsin was no longer able to guarantee the Russians peoples' "right to life and security." The liberal Yabloko group asserted that his behaviour demonstrated that he posed a danger for Russia. It is too soon to judge how deep the Chechen factor will bite into Yeltsin's waning popularity. But it is certainly an inauspicious beginning to Yeltsin's — still unofficial — election campaign.

When yellow and green don't go

The Newbury LibDem MP's support for the bypass is odd

ASK most people which is the greenest of the three main political parties and the chances are that they will choose the Liberal Democrats. Not without reason, either. The LibDems pride themselves on their consistent concern for the environment and regularly denigrate their opponents for having skin-deep or non-existent green credentials.

LibDem conferences are always full of green claims. Indeed only last autumn Paddy Ashdown went out of his way to devote a large part of his Glasgow party conference speech to the superiority and distinctiveness of his party's attitudes to road traffic. Cars are choking our country and our children, he said. The Conservatives' only answer was to build more roads. This meant, Mr Ashdown said, "More roads, spawning more service stations, throwing up more development, swallowing up more green fields, encouraging more cars, causing more pollution, increas-

ing the demand for — that's right — more roads." Protecting the environment, he said, means changing habits we have taken for granted for years.

This does not necessarily mean that the local LibDem MP David Rendel is wrong to support the controversial Newbury bypass scheme, of which he is such an energetic proponent. It is certainly possible to argue that, while new road schemes in general are undesirable, the Newbury scheme is an exception. Nevertheless, Mr Rendel's unswerving commitment to the controversial bypass will strike many people as odd, and will inevitably cast some doubt on the credibility of his party's environmental claims. In Glasgow Mr Ashdown said that Liberal Democrats could be trusted to take tough decisions in support of environmental concerns. It is scarcely surprising if some people think this is not borne out by their stance in Newbury.



Letters to the Editor

Moral of Dr Tate's tale

NEARLY 30 years ago, a novice teacher entered Form 4N at De La Salle College, Sheffield, and introduced himself with the unforgettable words: "My name is Tate, spelled T-A-T-E." One of the pupils blew a raspberry and simultaneously blew away any credibility Dr Tate thought he may have had.

De La Salle College was a direct grant Catholic boys' grammar school, now long demolished, probably to the relief of Dr Tate. It was run by a religious group known as the Brothers of John Baptist De La Salle and was an institution where the punishments were often meted out indiscriminately and violently by some, using an imaginative array of implements, including straps, canes, pencil boxes, busen-burner tubing, or a pinball.

Within such a regime of strict discipline, fear, violence and bullying, the pupils tended to imitate the traits and moods of their masters. Some newly arrived teachers managed to seize the initiative and survived. Dr Tate failed to do so and suffered the consequences. What followed for the next two years can only be described as truly horrendous. The top-stream form behaved for this particular teacher like predatory animals. There would be the initial pain of entering the classroom to be greeted with a gradual build-up of abuse and insults, and an exasperated outburst from Dr Tate.

Dr Tate was a decent man with, no doubt, impeccable academic credentials, but he had arrived at this particular time 20 years too late. The epic heroes of his history books were long gone, and we were well into the swing of the sixties, where our heroes were pop musicians. I wish him well with his proposals,

but I fear that once again he is out of step and out of time with a philosophy I perceive as an apology or mea culpa for his De La Salle days. Jake Piergies, Low Fold Barn, Lotherdale, West Yorks BD20 8SD.

SCHOOLS, we are now being told, should teach the difference between right and wrong, preferably through religion. Those who are demanding this seem unaware that there has never been any consensus as to what the difference is. As long ago as the 5th century BC, Plato pointed out that either what is right is right because God says it is right because it is, in the former case "that is right" meaning no more than "God says that is right", and in the latter case religion presupposing morality.

What schools should do is instill the need to live by as universally accepted as possible a code of conduct. If there is uncertainty about how to do this, there is (or was until recently) an extensive body of professional scholars to whom educational practitioners could (have) turned. G B Keene, Reader in Logic (Retired), Philosophy Dept (Defunct), Exeter Univ (De-philosophised), 78 Syden Road, Exeter EX4 6HA.

TEACHERS do have an important role to play in educating children to understand moral values. However, where should they point their pupils to for examples of good practice? The monarchy as a role model for family values? Industrial bosses as examples of moderation? The Church as a bastion of truth and spirituality? And if John Major and Tony Blair can't tell us the difference between left and

right, how surprising then that sometimes teachers find it hard to tell pupils what is good and what is bad. Mike Leaman, 7 Brooklyn Avenue, Loughton, Essex IG10 1BL.

IT IS in the very early pre-school years that children should be taught right from wrong and also hear that important word "no". In 14 years as a primary head-teacher I was often quite appalled at the lack of basic ideas of right and wrong in the reception-age children. If children are brought up in households where "anything goes", it is difficult for teachers to eradicate errors. It must be galling for teachers constantly to have public criticism: it is not for them to take on all society's ills. Omar Beg, 11 Shortwood Road, Pucklechurch, Avon BS17 3PL.

DOES anyone believe that kids take notice of teachers' moral lectures? Morality cannot be taught, it must be learnt. And you cannot learn morality by watching most adults — teachers and curriculum advisers included. As any Summerhillian will tell you, morality arises from life, not lectures. Roland Anderson, Head of Humanities, Summerhill School, Leiston, Suffolk IP16 4HY.

THE notion that children need to be taught the difference between right and wrong baffles the Japanese, who think of children as inherently good. "The transition from child to adulthood," says the educationalist Yoshitaki Yamamura, "is considered a step down." David Gribble, West Aish, Murchard Bishop, Exeter, Devon.

Arthur Scargill's new party will sort the pinks from the reds

MOST of us old middle-of-the-road Labour voters would agree with the general thrust of your leader (January 15). While we have invariably considered Arthur Scargill's proclamations to be honest but foolish, we are now finding young Tony's utterances are a cause for concern.

Some years ago we hoped for salvation from those other defectors who formed a new party. Unfortunately what they called social democracy looked to us like the Conservative Party Mark 2. Kinnock took on the fellow travellers and we cheered, Blair got rid of Clause 4 and we applauded — too soon. He now seems intent on doing what the Gang of Four failed to do: that is, turning the Labour Party into a Conservative Party Mark 3.

We want to be pro-Labour, not just anti-Tory. Some-where on the road between revolution and reformism, real and acceptable Labour policies are expiring from neglect. It should not be necessary to mention universal free health care and education, but if you add long-term plans to take the utilities back into public ownership you then have the basis for a party which would be clearly different from the other two as well, I believe, as being popular.

Blair's intention of abandoning the central planks of Labour's policies and principles to gain power may succeed, but to what end? We pale pink Old Labour voters are hardly likely to follow Scargill into the wilderness, but we could well jump ship in despair. The disaffected Tories who just might grit their teeth and vote Labour this once will be no substitute for us. Maurice Jennings, 31 Latchmere Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 5TP.

THE danger for Tony Blair is that there will now be not just an alternative focus for leftwing parliamentary organisation but also a credible examination of his policies from the left, something which has until now been successfully crushed within the Labour Party. If Labour gets elected next time, will it be New Labour or Not The Major Party? Or does it matter?

If Scargill helps clarify New Labour, he will have done yet another big favour for democracy. Ian Pollard, 23 Malton Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport.

A Country Diary

LITTLE HEATH, BERKHAMSTED. The oak's lower rib must have cracked and splayed down to an almost horizontal position during one of the late autumn gales. It was on one of the self-sown hybrids between sessile and pedunculate oaks that are quite frequent amongst the older groups of trees on our common. But far more remarkable was that its entire upper surface was matted with lichens, a real thick West Country quilt of them. I tend not to see many ostentatious lichens on trees this far north in the Chilterns, except for a few rosettes of the foliose kinds — and then chiefly on ash trees. But this oak branch had a full suite. There were at least four Parmelia species, including one I couldn't place which had the mixed russet and orange colouring of a fading wine stain. Dozens of shrublets of oakmoss, Evernia prunastri, with its meaty-green strap-like branches; even several tufts of a beard-lichen (Usnia

IF THE Left wants any influence in future, it has to accept that the world has changed since 1979 and democratic socialists must change with it. Tony Blair has rightly made the key point that if Labour is to succeed in government, we must promote both competitive flexibility in our economy and security and stability in our society.

Economically, there is no alternative to a close partnership between private industry, the finance sector and the state, to end the destructive short-termism of recent years. All the world's most successful economies have developed in this way. They have also promoted a modern training and education system so that citizens can take advantage of economic opportunities when they arise. Most have also sought a social partnership between employers and employees. The term "stakeholder economy" captures these objectives very well. Michael Meecher MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Employment, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

OUR generation saw as young adults the birth of the welfare state. We expected life-long care. We believed, too, that the means test had been consigned to limbo.

We did not run a car and chose to let a room in our house, so our capital and income put us just over the means-tested benefit point. We have recently paid for new spectacles and costly dental work and expect that the surviving partner will have to sell the house to fund residential care. The suggestion that we should buy a car, stop letting the room, and plead the statutory level of poverty is perhaps not so silly. We are not too concerned about the final form of Blair's Clause 4 alternative, but would dearly love him to evoke the spirit of the '45 Labour government and reintroduce a welfare system free from the means test. We would like to be stakeholders in that society. Keith & Sheila Jones, 21 Silver Street, Glastonbury BA6 8BS.

THE Socialist Labour Party was created in 1902. Shouldn't Arthur Scargill therefore call his party — New Socialist Labour? Allan Kassel, 23 Vernon Road, Harrogate HG2 8DE.

We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used.

La travaiata

AS THE gentleman who unwittingly talked to your reporter in the Royal Opera House last night, I thought it might be worth pointing out to the public who will bear the brunt of any anger resulting from the documentary, *The House*.

After all, railing against the artistic establishment that some of our management represent can seem as unproductive as complaining about being misrepresented by a reporter eager for a glib line. Joseph Green, The Box Office, Royal Opera House, London WC2E 9DD.

THE BBC World Service is yet again under threat by a government that displays little understanding of this unique asset. The World Service, unlike other international broadcasters, retains independent editorial control of its output. This is the significant reason why the World Service holds the enviable position of being trusted worldwide and has the largest international audience.

A rolling cut of £20 million will result in many vernacular languages being cut. The Foreign Secretary should recognise that the World Service allows Britain to punch above its weight. Phil Symcox, (Retired chair of BBC World Service BECTU), 4 The Woods, Scrub Lane, Hadleigh, Essex SS7 2JF.



A new pub tradition is born

NINETEEN-eighty-four has reached the Harvesters pub in the village of Harvester, where the chain, dictates to its bar staff at what volume the piped music should be played, depending on the time of the day and the day of the week. The music is, of course, chosen by Bass F&Q.

Traditionally, each English pub shows its individuality in

its architecture, decor and, above all, in its customers. It is the people who have sipped in the pub over the years who have contributed to making these places unique. By imposing music, Bass is contravening this tradition. A Rudd, 1 Matthews Street, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8ES.

A veritable mine of information

GEORGE MONBIOT (Indonesia) exploits remote land that the world forgot. January 15) restates misinformation which distorts the reality of Freeport's mining activities in Irian Jaya.

In the late 1960s, when Freeport first arrived in the area of the present Grasberg mine, no one lived at the high altitude (11,000 feet plus) mine site, and only 400 lived in the corridor between the mine and the coast, some 75 miles to the south.

The fact is that the indigenous people have never been forcibly relocated as a consequence of mining and no one is "threatened with eviction" by the mine's contemplated expansion. As confirmed publicly in October by the governor of Irian Jaya, Freeport has met its obligations under its contracts of work, including compensation, in full. Freeport is offering the people of the villages in the area education, healthcare and job training. It has helped raise life expectancy, reduce infant mortality and dramatically cut the incidence of malaria. Economic initiatives are providing capital and training for local entrepreneurs and the development of sustainable skills.

Had Mr Monbiot visited the Freeport operational area, as have many RTZ executives since the company acquired an 11.8 per cent interest in its US-based parent early last year, he would have seen the beneficial results of the \$14 million a year community-based projects. John G Hughes, RTZ Limited, 6 St James's Square, London SW1V 4LD.

رسالة من الامم المتحدة

Diary

Matthew Norman

I AM distressed to learn that an old royal rumour is circulating once again... It is the one about Prince Andrew being sired by Lord Forchester, the son of the Queen's racing manager, and possibly in a stable. We experts, or "royal watchers" as we prefer to be styled, seldom dignify such foolishness with comment...

AFTER a series of burglaries, Slough... Pen: The Unauthorised Biography of Kitty Kelley... I have therefore decided to launch a pre-emptive strike, by making Poison Pen: The Unauthorised Biography of Kitty Kelley the new Book of the Month...

HOWEVER bleak the economic indicators, one industry that never suffers is the Kray industry, and soon to be published is the 17th book on the twins. The Barmald's Tale by Mrs X. Mrs X (then, perhaps, Miss X) was working at the Blind Beggar the night George Cornell called Ronald "the pecker" an impenetrable silence for which he paid the ultimate price...

TWO months after students soaked them with paint, Brian Mahoney and Alan Duncan have finally got round to putting in their expenses for their ruined suits. The Tory chairman has claimed a modest £200 for his whistle, while little Duncan (deputy head of paperclips at Central Office) has put in for £1,000 - a sharper disparity even than it seems, since the Duncan suit can barely have required half as much cloth.

FROM Prison Service News, there comes a timely reminder that the prison system has its humane side after all. In a vox pop asking prisoners what they would most like to work, and why, Mark Plummer dreams of a job in a Saudi Arabian nick, "as they still have corporal and capital punishments... Robert Taylor goes for Singapore, because "they put people in prison as a punishment"; and Andy Colthup is one of several to plump for America, "as the prison regimes are much tougher, and prison officers all carry guns". These three gentlemen are invited to contact Michael Howard, who is making an early start on his next Tory conference speech.

COCA-Cola has been forced to withdraw several thousand advertising posters distributed all over Australasia, after both a tumbler pen and a wide range of pens were discovered hidden in the artwork.



Only basket cases need apply

Commentary
Will Hutton

BRITAIN may be a global power with global interests, as the Conservative right like to boast - but that cuts no ice with the Government when it comes to development aid and assistance. The aid programme, emasculated over the Conservative years, is now set to shrivel further.

The details of the Fundamental Expenditure Review of the Overseas Development Agency (ODA), in the hands of the Guardian, show that the government now plans to offer only limited aid to some 20 of the world's poorest countries - and in the long run even that greatly-scaled-back commitment may be under threat.

Private investment is a priori better than any public investment or assistance; and it is only through the private sector and marketisation of their economic and social spheres that underdeveloped countries can make any progress with their ambitions to grow and better their condition.

mounted since the war would in effect be abandoned. This year's review of public spending was billed as "exceptionally tight", involving "tough decisions" - but the phrases have been so degraded by over-use that few believed it. But this year really was different. Already it is public knowledge, for example, that the prison service and the BBC World Service are facing a degree of stringency that menaces their effective functioning; now the ODA can be added to the list of lambs sacrificed to the altar of a 20-per cent standard rate of income tax. The fundamental review, agonising enough, had been based on the budget figures; now November's cuts more than warrant its pessimism.

Britain's aid budget is an obvious target for public expenditure savings. The beneficiaries do not vote in Britain; the benefits are diffuse; and New Right theories of economic development argue that aid, rather like welfare, at best is ineffective or at worst generates a culture of dependency.

taking hits - with the singular exception of the period when Chris Patten ran the ODA - throughout the Conservative years. When the Conservatives took office, aid represented 1.6 per cent of Central Government Expenditure; by 1977/8, on last November's public spending plans, it will have halved to 0.8 per cent. At less than 0.3 per cent of GDP in 1994 it was well below the average in the European Union, and is set to fall still further.

YET, says the review, the reality has to be faced that Britain's aid budget is so constrained that bilateral assistance to most countries now falls below critical mass. The government has to respond as a company would under such pressure: focus on specific areas. Infant mortality, literacy and poverty are worst in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia - India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Britain should aim to concentrate 85 per cent or more of its aid on 20 countries in these two regions and forget the rest.

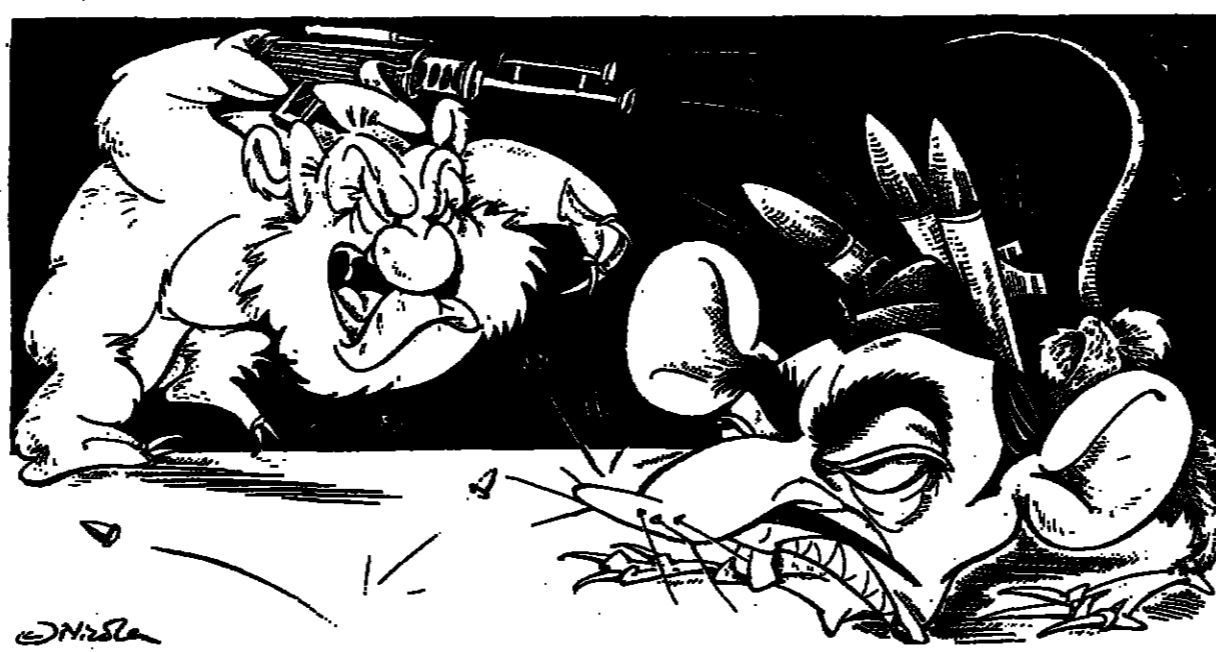
There remains, however, the larger question. Is the quest for a 20-per cent standard rate of income tax a matter of such overwhelming importance that not merely the universal carcase state but Britain's aid effort abroad should be progressively de-programmed? In a NOP opinion poll only 11 per cent of respondents thought that the government should spend less than the penny in the pound it currently does on aid. But if political expediency is ever given to that voice, the British should not be surprised at the choices allegedly made in their name.

ing for them: there are few great export industries that can expect new orders "tied" to British aid acting as a lobby. Indeed with the government convinced, rightly, that the aid effort should now focus more on building up education, health and government structures rather than the massive dams or power stations of old, there are less joyful orders to be won. By the early years of the next century, unless policy changes, we can expect very little bilateral British aid at all.

There are now close political colleagues were not invented by the present regime. Almost as if the picture in Chechnya is a picture in Chechnya is a picture in Chechnya...

Martin Woollacott calls for curbs on the mayhem of 'small wars' like the Chechen conflict, while below David Hearst explains the Russian military embarrassment

A war without rules



THERE sometimes comes a point in war where one or both sides ceases to fight to win and begins to fight simply to wound and rend. That point has been passed in Chechnya, and passed by the Chechens rather than by the Russians. The world needs to match its dismay at Russia's harsh methods with a condemnation of the ill-judged means with which the Chechens are pursuing their cause.

political gains by threatening to execute the hostages, or by creating the conditions in which the hostages were likely to be killed, morally the same thing, became its purpose. Even if the Russians invented the story about the killing of hostages at Pervomayskaya, it is still the Chechen and not the Russian forces who put those people, Dagestanis and fellow Muslim Caucasians, in harm's way.

against Russian policies. The argument that civilians are fair game leads in all wars to the worst excesses. Chechnya is far from the only instance where the intransigence of both sides and the impossibility of a clear military outcome means that the most terrible violence can be perpetrated without affecting the odds on the final result or shortening the conflict. Thirty or more "small wars" afflict the planet. Most are internal affairs. Some are struggles where, as in Chechnya, the central regime has basically won but has not got the means or the will to complete the victory. We need rules for these half-wars.

War is too red-eyed and angry a force to be tamed by rules or by world opinion. Yet rules and world opinion have frequently affected it, and can sometimes prevent the worst. The picture in Chechnya is a terrible one. On the one side are Russian forces, ill-trained, over-equipped, plagued by rivalries between different units and commanders, and undoubtedly responsible for atrocities. They have half won the war, but through both military and political incompetence, cannot make a peace. On the other are Chechen fighters, who seem ready to target Russian civilians as a means of continuing the fight. Both deserve censure and to be reminded that this is not only their war, but ours as well, since its effects, in oblique but unpleasant ways, can touch us all.

Dark days for yesterday's heroes

IN ONE blitzkrieg of a day in December 1979, the Soviet Union's crack KGB and army paratroopers captured the airport in Kabul, the Afghan capital, creating a bridgehead for invading troops; then they stormed a presidential palace defended by hundreds of troops and killed its occupant, Hafizullah Amin.

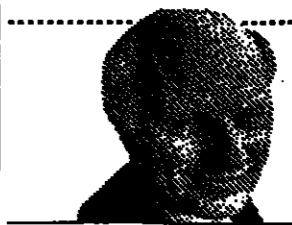
recorded what everyone feared - artillery barrages and tank fire flattening the school roof where some of the hostages were being held. The press spokesmen have been aping the language of the Gulf war and the Bosnian crisis, where Nato briefers displayed film of their surgical strikes; but the event of the first world war is before the public's eyes. The Russian consumer of news has become so conditioned to expect a disaster from an operation carried out by its government that the instinctive tendency yesterday was to believe the Chechens, when they denied executing two of their police hostages on Sunday, the alleged pretext of Boris Yeltsin's order to storm.

who advocated the dismantling of everything connected with the Soviet Union, only to be abandoned by Yeltsin's lack of executive power and the rise of a nationalist opposition. The two are linked. The Soviet Union could offer its best and brightest soldiers something more precious than training, co-optation, and the best available equipment - ideology. It had ceased being Marxist-Leninist, but it had a clear concept of the Motherland. The Union had its patriots, and with them a coherent concept of national security. The borders of the Union made sense to those sent to guard them.

whole of Belarus still "feel" Russian, though they are now foreign countries. The post-Communist map makes no sense to them. A poor case has been made, in their minds, for a war in Chechnya, the bloodiest conflict on Federation soil since the second world war. Yeltsin and his inner circle, and the best democrats armed Dzhokhar Dudayev, the rebel president, and then turned against him when it was too late.

advances and sudden, unexpected retreats. On-the-ground elite troops have more immediate fears: the actions of the man behind them as well as the enemy in front. They know how under-resourced and under-trained the army is; besides, this "army" is a myriad of squads responsible to at least three different ministers. Russia's crack troops are the victims of 10 years of "reform". If widowed, their wives, and children, may be being housed in flats or a pension that withstands inflation. Their two commanders in chief - Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin - regularly betrayed them: Gorbachev was hated by the Alpha crack unit after refusing to open up to the operation against Vilnius Television Station in January 1991.

Days of hope and glory and backstabbing



David McKie

FIRST, an apology. Michael Foot described Norman Tebbit not as a "semi-trained polecat" but as a "semi-house-trained polecat", which was what I thought I had written last week till the telephone started to ring. Goodness knows what became of the house. Repossessed, I assume.

papers, switched off the street lights and closed down rail passenger services. A furious economic crisis in the summer led to a barrage of fresh privatisations, including a cut in food rations, especially meat - a ban on all foreign travel for pleasure, and abolition of the basic petrol ration. Backbenchers alternately raged and quivered. Ministers gunned for each other, and for Attlee. In the spring of 1947 George Brown warned Dalton, to whom he was PPS, that during late-night sittings the lads were clamouring for Attlee to go. A bizarre attempt at a coup began in the autumn, when Cripps and Dalton told Morrison, the deputy leader, to tell Attlee it was his duty to make way for Bevin. Morrison was affronted: not because he thought that Attlee should be preserved, but because in his view the man to take over wasn't Bevin, his old antagonist, but himself.

But it can't have been how it felt at the time. It's almost impossible now to comprehend how a government could have withstood the problems which fell upon Attlee in 1946-47. The King's Speech debate at the start of the session provoked two huge backbench rebellions. Some 60 MPs including Foot, Crossman, Nye Bevan's wife Jennie Lee and the young Barbara Castle - tabled an amendment attacking the whole direction of foreign policy for getting too close to the US. Sixty to 70 abstained when it came to the vote. There were 72 Labour votes on second reading against the Government's Bill for peacetime conscription. By then a cruel winter, compounded by previous shortages, had led to emergency measures which shut down a whole of productive industry, putting two million out of work, turned off domestic power for five hours a day, silenced the BBC Third Programme, still further emaciated the thin little news-

THAT wasn't because the people were out of the picture. Their privations were all too real, and the squabbling all too open. On the other hand, the government's torments weren't rammed down the voters' throats every 10 minutes. The TV news barely mattered. The radio news was trampled, cautious, restrained. The newspapers, constrained by newspaper restrictions which the economic crisis tightened, had little space to deploy. But other factors must have weighed even more. An electorate more accustomed, after the war years, to enduring, more instinctively loyal, less swayed by short-term factors, than today's shop-around voters. And an electorate, perhaps most crucially, which had voted Labour in '45 out of positive hope and commitment, where in '52 the electorate voted holding its nose, well aware that the Tories had held power too long, but fearful of the alternative.

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Wednesday January 17 1996

Markets sniff the sweet smell of cheaper money, page 12
Swifter review urged on pensions mis-selling, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Warburg 'traded Forte shares'

Paul Murphy
SBC WARBURG, one of Forte's closest City advisers, is believed to have been speculating on Forte's fluctuating share price while the hostile takeover bid from Granada has progressed — with the investment bank effectively hedging its bets in the event that Forte loses its independence.

American investment bank JP Morgan, which is said to have slapped a global restriction on trading in either Forte or Granada as soon as the bid was launched.

But its traders are thought to have been "arbitraging" Forte stock — taking a series of "no-risk" dealing positions which enabled the firm to profit from short-term anomalies between the share prices of Forte and Granada.

Warburg declined to comment yesterday, while the Forte camp simply stated that it believed its adviser had disclosed its trading position properly.

The head of equity trading at a rival investment bank yesterday defended Warburg's right to follow such trading practices. "In principle there is nothing wrong. The trading arm is dealing on information which is in the public domain, and to restrict such dealing would be tantamount to an admission that the Chinese walls do not work."

had stopped short of the 9.9 per cent ceiling "in order to keep back a little market firepower" ahead of the close of the bid next Monday.

Notebook Rate hopes keep the gloom at bay



Alex Brummer

IT COULD have been thought that UK share prices might be tumbling given the gloomy economic prospects in our most significant Continental markets and the broadside against the Treasury's own forecasts by the Commons select committee. But not a bit of it.

Pensions deadline
THE interim report from the Securities Investment Board, on the mis-selling of up to 600,000 personal pensions, hardly makes for reassuring reading.

Rough passage
WITH its shares bringing an 8 per cent return, P & O has the dubious distinction of being the highest yielding stock in the FTSE, having recently displaced Hanson in this honourable position.

Australian gay bank aims to siphon off 'pink dollars'
CHRYSTIAN ZIM in Sydney and insurance. Gma Lyons, convener of the Gay and Lesbian Financial Institutions Research Project, said there was strong support within the gay community for its own bank.

Fury as Scottish shuts two breweries

1,600 jobs lost as Labour blasts boom in boardroom and bust for workforce. 'Obvious Tories unfit to run country when Chancellor's local brewer axes people'

Roger Cowe

ASTORM of protest met yesterday's announcement from Britain's biggest brewer, Scottish & Newcastle, that it is to close two breweries following last year's \$425 million takeover of Courage.

The axing of Nottingham's Home Brewery and the Webster's site in Halifax, together with 13 distribution depots around the country, will lead to 1,600 job losses.



Last orders... racker John Rusby leaves Halifax's doomed Fountain Head brewery. The town once boasted 100 breweries. PHOTOGRAPH: DON MCPHEE

Labour's employment spokesman, Ian McCartney, said the news undermined the Government's attempts to talk up the economy and he seized on the fact that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, is one of Nottingham's MPs.

which had come together after the Courage takeover. Camra dismissed this. Mr Cos said the difference in production costs would be insignificant and concentration of brewing merely resulted in higher distribution costs.

The Halifax plant, which had belonged to Grand Metropolitan before Courage's ownership, would have needed substantial investment.

Home ales will continue to be brewed, under licence, by Mansfield Brewery, which will make Lion Beers, originally brewed by Matthew Brown, which was acquired by S&N in 1987 and then closed down.

senior officer 14 years ago. At 7am yesterday the first shift learned they would be among the last.

European Union aid on Friday. The town is surrounded by areas with European Objective 2 status, making Halifax "the hole in the doughnut", said Steven Bonfield, who leads the chamber of commerce.

S&N turns off taps as drinkers' habits change

Outlook/As regional beers and foreign lagers win acceptance, brewers swing the axe. Pauline Springett reports

SCOTTISH & Newcastle's decision yesterday to axe 1,600 jobs is the latest evidence that the brewing industry has far from completed its consolidation. Quite simply, there are too many brewers producing too much beer.

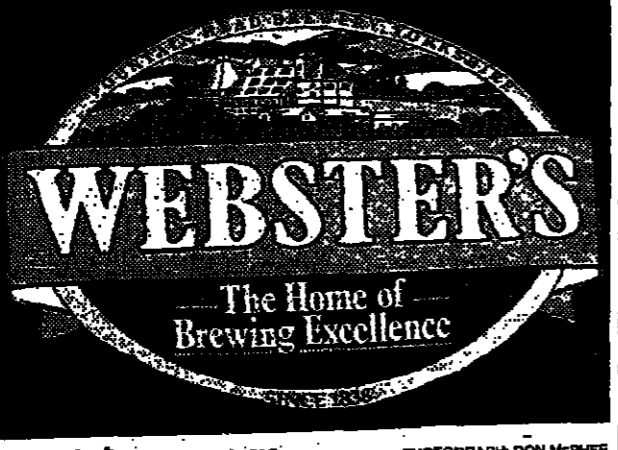
changing as new-style foreign lagers find favour. Die-hard beer drinkers are increasingly attracted to regional branded beers and ales.

rather than breweries because it is the pubs which are the bigger moneyspinners.

Whitbread does go ahead, the company would become the largest UK brewer.

That is a slot currently occupied by Scottish & Newcastle, following its purchase last year of Courage. S&N's best known brands now include McEwans, John Smiths, Courage Directors, Theakston and Beamin.

its eponymous brand, include Worthington, Tennents, Stones and Carling Black Label. Bass's room for manoeuvre has been constrained by its size which would be likely to provoke a monopolies investigation if it attempted any major acquisition.

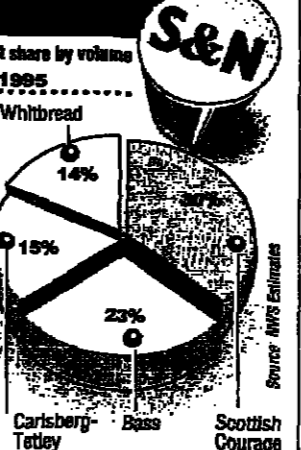


No longer at home in Halifax. PHOTOGRAPH: DON MCPHEE

for consumption at home. Given the supermarkets' buying power these rising sales yield less profit than the pub beer they replace.

But because more than 90 per cent of beer is produced by the big four, it is their decisions which will shape the market for the foreseeable future.

Beer shares
Consolidation of beer market, % market share by volume 1995



PHOTOGRAPH: DON MCPHEE

There is also a view, however, that the IFAs — unlike the life companies — do not seem to be in a hurry to deal with the claims they are being forced to take up the slack and dispel the shadow over the industry.

PHOTOGRAPH: DON MCPHEE

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.01	France 7.41	Italy 2.90	Singapore 2.18
Austria 15.10	Germany 2.18	Malta 0.5425	South Africa 5.45
Belgium 44.90	Greece 364.00	Netherlands 2.4500	Spain 163.00
Canada 2.04	Hong Kong 11.72	New Zealand 2.29	Sweden 10.08
Cyprus 0.8975	India 65.37	Norway 9.50	Switzerland 1.74
Denmark 8.43	Ireland 0.9500	Portugal 227.00	Turkey 98.466
Finland 8.70	Israel 6.22	Saudi Arabia 6.71	USA 1.5075

Tennis

Rusedski fails to reach Henman high

David Irvine in Melbourne

IT WAS a long road, a hard road and for a gutsy Greg Rusedski, in whose nostrils the scent of victory must have seemed so very strong here at Flinders Park...

like Boris, if you give him just a little bit of a chance he takes it and just keeps going, said Rusedski. "I don't know what we saw what a great player he is. And the great players can turn these matches around."

not hurt Becker enough, especially in the later stages. Henman's much-improved serve and sharp and accurate volleying gave the way for his 5-7, 7-6, 6-3, 6-4 win over Korda, who only nine days ago won the Qatar Open, where the Briton failed even to qualify for the main draw...



Serving notice... Tim Henman powers to victory over Petr Korda at Flinders Park

Pierce opens her defence with powerful but patchy display

HIT-or-miss Mary Pierce, facing an opponent ranked 108 in the world, opened the defence of her Australian title with an unconvincing 6-3, 6-1 win, writes David Irvine.

Conchita Martinez's 6-4, 6-1 victory over Britain's No. 1 Clare Wood. Wood, a qualifier, briefly threatened to embarrass the No. 2 seed, but eventually classed out.

seventh in the world rankings in 1995, only just failing to deny Becker - who called him "an Agassi with a serve" - a place in the ATP Championship final.

"When it's warm it suits my game because I make my opponents run far more than they make me run." This being Stefan Edberg's last appearance in Melbourne, greater interest centred on his match with Jiri Novak.

says, with being described as a one-shot wonder, the Croat hit only 10 aces and beat Bernd Karbacher 6-4, 7-6, 6-3 chiefly from the baseline.

The champion apprentice Seb Sanders was given a seven-day suspension for failing to attend and give evidence at a Jockey Club inquiry last month.

Racing

Gillespie carries can for fiasco at Cheltenham

Graham Rock

EDWARD GILLESPIE, acting clerk of the course at Cheltenham on December 9, was fined £600 by the disciplinary committee of the Jockey Club yesterday for the handling of the late abandonment of the Triple print Gold Cup meeting that day.

being told he was expected to give evidence in London. Sanders chose to ride at Lingfield. His suspension runs from January 19 to 26, and he is considering an appeal.

Windsor runners and riders with form guide

- 1.10 Pilkington
1.40 Dart
2.10 No Fiddling
2.40 Garrison Commander (nap)
3.10 Kelly Mo
3.40 No Pala Mo Gain
4.10 Pyramic Prince

- 2.40 WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
1. 2256-4 BALLY GLOVER (44) N/A...
2. 4511-48 HOLY STING (44) N/A...
3. 29-121 SAM GRIFFIN (44) N/A...
4. 3141-2 BOURNE (27) C...
5. 31-102 FOX GRAPPEL (27) C...
6. 4202-9 TIRRELL (44) N/A...
7. 402-4 GARRY BROWN (44) N/A...
8. 402-4 GARRY BROWN (44) N/A...
9. 402-4 GARRY BROWN (44) N/A...
10. 402-4 GARRY BROWN (44) N/A...

Nottingham

- 1.30 Ziegler
1.50 Kelly Lougher
2.20 Marnava
2.50 Waterford Castle
3.30 Talsman (alt)
3.50 Campaign

Wolverhampton (A.W. Flat)

- 3.00 Shalby
3.30 Pharty Dancer
3.00 Ocean Park
3.30 Maple Bay
4.00 Pharty Dancer
4.30 Chalking Stone

Results

CARLISLE
1.00 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
1.25 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
1.50 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
2.10 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
2.40 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
3.10 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
3.40 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
4.10 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
4.40 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
5.10 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...
5.40 (5) HADLEY'S J. JOCKEY...

Results

WINDSOR
1.10 (5) PILKINGTON...
1.40 (5) DART...
2.10 (5) NO FIDDLING...
2.40 (5) GARRISON COMMANDER...
3.10 (5) KELLY MO...
3.40 (5) NO PALA MO GAIN...
4.10 (5) PYRAMIC PRINCE...
2.40 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
3.10 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
3.40 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
4.10 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
4.40 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...

Results

NOTTINGHAM
1.30 (5) ZIEGLER...
1.50 (5) KELLY LOUGHER...
2.20 (5) MARNAVA...
2.50 (5) WATERFORD CASTLE...
3.30 (5) TALSMAN (ALT)...
3.50 (5) CAMPAIGN...
2.50 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP CHASE...
3.20 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP CHASE...
3.50 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP CHASE...
4.20 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP CHASE...
4.50 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP CHASE...

Results

WOLVERHAMPTON
2.30 (5) SHALBY...
3.00 (5) PHARTY DANCER...
3.30 (5) OCEAN PARK...
3.30 (5) MAPLE BAY...
4.00 (5) PHARTY DANCER...
4.30 (5) CHALKING STONE...
3.00 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
3.30 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
3.60 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
3.90 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
4.20 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...

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3.90 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...
4.20 (5) WINDSOR HANDICAP BARRAGE...

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